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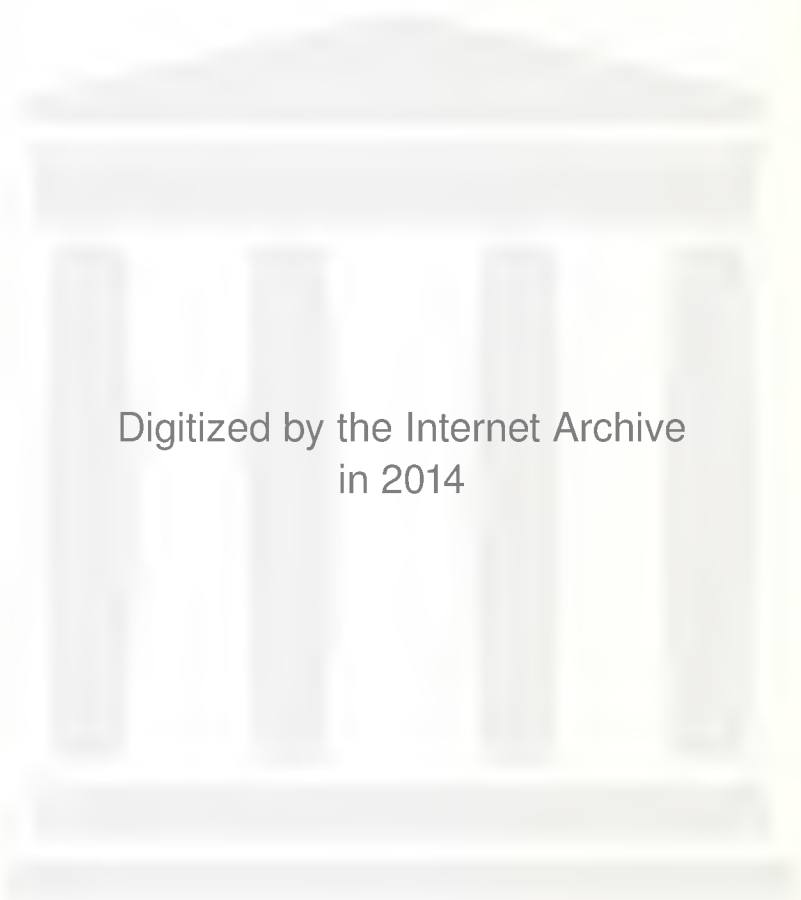

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THE MIRAGE OF VERSAILLES

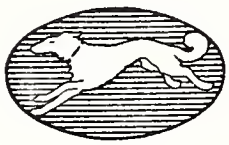
THE MIRAGE OF VERSAILLES

BY

HERMANN STEGEMANN

Translated by

R. T. CLARK



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FOREWORD

THIS book is an attempt to trace the historical connections and elucidate the strategic aspects of the Versailles settlement. It follows on the two earlier works *The History of the War* and *The Struggle for the Rhine* and seeks to place before the reader the necessary knowledge of high politics which every day make history around us.

I have sought to describe the settlement both in detail and as a whole, to explain its significance and to identify the forces which have been decisive in the history of the states concerned. I need not say that I realise the immense difficulty of the task, that the exposition cannot possibly cover all the ground and that the attempt to connect facts and ideas in order to obtain wide generalisations and broad outlook is conditioned by the limits set to this book. To confine myself to the essential appeared the only way to treat the mass of material.

Although the development of Germany is not specially dealt with, my book as a historical work is principally concerned with the fate of that country. It has much to say on the conflict in which Germany and Germanism have been engaged since the days of Versailles, a conflict which in its widest and highest significance is a struggle for their resurrection. On its issue depends the fate of Europe.

HERMANN STEGEMANN.

BERN,
December 24, 1925.

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
	FOREWORD	7
CHAPTER		
I.	WORLD WAR AND LEAGUE OF NATIONS	13
II.	FRANCE AND THE HEGEMONY OF EUROPE	27
III.	BELGIUM AS A EUROPEAN POWER	51
IV.	THE NETHERLANDS AND SWITZERLAND IN THE NEW EUROPE	58
V.	THE RÔLE OF AUSTRIA	74
VI.	BOHEMIA AND CZECH SUPREMACY	82
VII.	POLAND OLD AND NEW	99
VIII.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALTIC STATES	122
IX.	SWEDEN, DENMARK AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE BALTIC	134
X.	HUNGARY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CENTRAL EUROPE	151
XI.	GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICS IN ROUMANIA	171
XII.	JUGOSLAVS AND BULGARS	189
XIII.	ITALY AND ITS HISTORIC AIMS	218
XIV.	SPAIN'S FIGHT FOR HER LAST POSSESSIONS	235
XV.	THE TRAGEDY OF GREECE	245
XVI.	OLD AND NEW TURKEY AND THE EASTERN QUESTION	259
XVII.	RUSSIA: NATIONAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AIMS	274
XVIII.	BRITAIN'S STRUGGLE FOR THE EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWER AND THE RISE OF ANGLO-SAXONDOM TO WORLD DOMINION	293
XIX.	THE TRAGIC RÔLE OF GERMANY	316
XX.	GERMANY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS	335
	INDEX	345

MAPS

		PAGE
1.	THE FRENCH BASE OF OPERATIONS ON THE RHINE IN 1924	40
2.	THE LINES OF ITALIAN ATTACK NORTHWARD AND THE SWISS DEFENSIVE TRIANGLE	70
3.	POLAND'S OFFENSIVE FLANK AGAINST GERMANY	117
4.	STRATEGIC CONDITIONS ON THE BALTIC	136
5.	GREAT ROUMANIA	185
6.	THE CONFLICT IN THE RIFF	243
7.	THE SOUTHERN BALKANS AND THE ÆGEAN	257
8.	MOSUL AND THE BRITISH LINES OF ATTACK IN IRAK	268

THE MIRAGE OF VERSAILLES

CHAPTER I

WORLD WAR AND LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The World War was the first universal crisis of imperialism. By it the two old geo-political problems of Europe—the struggle for the Rhine and the struggle for the Bosporus—were invested with terrible significance and its result was the fall of Germany from the height of her prosperity, the disruption of Austria-Hungary, the dissolution of the European state system, the shattering of Europe's predominance in the world and the creation of a universal state of tension. It has led us to a new period of development in which the present generation lies, as it were, in the trough of the sea and the victors of the war have had the rudder torn from their hands. World events are to-day decided by forces whose powers cannot be estimated. But the geographical basis of history has not changed and the laws of strategy which the nations have obeyed since antiquity are still valid.

The war which was nominally fought to maintain the European equilibrium alleged to be threatened by Germany, but which actually arose out of the universal tendency to imperialism on the part of the leading nations, did not preserve that equilibrium but destroyed it. But amid the chaos in which the new state system is being built up, are still clearly seen the historical bases on which the new development timidly seeks to establish itself. Europe still fights for precedence in the world. The area which has widened from the Mediterranean coasts to the ice-caps and the steppe, is still the leader of world development. The desire for power and expansion on the part of the white races established in Europe and America is not quenched and still works as a fermenting force over the whole planet.

The new map of the world drawn at Versailles by the victors

is the mirror in which is reflected a dismemberered world. In the wildness of its design and the glaringness of its colours it shows that the World War has not resolved the world crisis, but has ended in blind confusion. The old universalist impulse to the union of humanity and the principles of national selection have never been so fiercely in conflict as to-day.

Among the great peace treaties which from the XVIth century until to-day have organised Europe, the Treaty of Versailles, with its complements the Treaties of the Trianon, Neuilly and St. Germain, is something apart. It was not the result of negotiation but was prepared by the victors and imposed on the vanquished. It is not a treaty like the great European treaties which in the past three centuries were concluded between the nations in order, after conflict, to place the European state system once more on the path of development and to restore the equilibrium that had been destroyed. On the contrary, it is a legal verdict with none of the dignity of a treaty ; its legality rests solely on force and there will be eternal regret that the ideal conception of a League of Nations received form amid surroundings so mean.

It is not the task of this book to describe the conflict of ideas in the shattered world of to-day. Its task is to describe the actual circumstances created by the Versailles settlement and to link them to the historical development of Europe in order to reveal the terrible contradictions embodied in the settlement and even in the constitution of the League of Nations, which has been intimately but wrongfully linked with the territorial provisions of the settlement. Its task is to reveal historical associations and strategic conditions in order to make clear the historical significance of the World War and of the new organisation of the world which was its result ; an organisation which, despite its political activity, is nothing but a political mirage.

The League of Nations, which is intended " to promote co-operation between the nations and the establishment of peace and security among them " and was meant to be annexed as a universally valid peace pact to a universally accepted state of peace, will be discussed only in so far as it is part of the settlement and guarantor and executive instrument thereof.

The Wilsonian idea of a League of Nations has been shattered

in the European area by those forces which have been active throughout history on those Powers which for generations have struggled for hegemony. They used it as an addition to the body of diplomatic and juridical instruments which would enable them to enlist the aid of all the nations in the struggle to secure their gigantic war gains and to distribute the responsibility for the settlement universally. The ideal aim of the League was to prevent war and to give wider scope to the idea of arbitration, but that has been subordinated to the maintenance of the Versailles settlement. The relative positions of the Powers became stabilised when the spoils won from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey were disposed of and something like " a state of eternal public peace " was proclaimed. That could only be attained if an act were drawn up " to provide co-operation between the nations and to guarantee peace and security " in which specific obligations were imposed not to go to war, in which maintenance of relations based on justice and honour between the nations and sufficient regard for the instructions laid down by the League of Nations were promised, and in which was contained the solemn pledge " to let justice rule and to fulfil scrupulously all treaty obligations."

The League Covenant contains twenty-six articles of which Articles 8, 10, 15, 16 and 17 give the measure and aim of the League. Article 8 obliges members to recognise that the maintenance of peace demands a reduction of national armaments to a minimum compatible with national security and with the international obligations implied in a common action, and gives the League Council the duty of preparing plans for disarmament which will take into account the geographical situation and the special circumstances of each state so that the various Governments may examine and decide upon them.

The article commits members to a principle without making it secure. It is based on assumptions which had not been realised when the League came into existence and can never be realised as long as the state system created at Versailles obeys the laws there laid down for it, since universal disarmament implies the establishment of a state of peace in which all the ordinary rights to existence are recognised. Neverthe-

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less the article is of importance in that it lays down expressly that the geographical situation and special circumstances of each state must be taken into account. As the defeated Powers were condemned to be fully disarmed and as Germany especially was submitted to a disarmament without parallel in history, the principle is worthless, although the disarmament carried out has created very special and peculiarly difficult circumstances.

Article 10 obliges members to respect and maintain against all foreign aggression the territorial integrity and the political independence of member-states. This provision, too, has no secure foundation since it assumes the existence of a similar state of peace and it is comprehensible only when one remembers that, in 1919, Germany was expressly excluded from the League. It acquires thereby the significance of a guarantee of the settlement.

If we seek to place the realities of the Versailles settlement in relation to the League Covenant we reach surprising conclusions. The reconstruction of Europe at Versailles reveals both progress and reaction. The principle of nationalities and the right of peoples to self-determination are not applied as universally binding principles, but as instruments for the crushing of the vanquished. The League of Nations is a great conception, but the League took form, as a preserver of peace, not as a League of peoples but as a system of alliances of the victors and their clients which attracted to itself the insecure neutral nations and became rapidly the executive organ of the settlement.

In the coupling of the League Covenant with the Peace Treaty was revealed the triumph of Anglo-French policy over the doctrinaire Americanism of Wilson. Only thus did the treaty become a charter with a claim to world application and to permanent force, even although it has not the character of an agreement negotiated between the signatories.

When by Article 10 the signatories of the Covenant pledged themselves to respect and maintain against foreign aggression the territorial integrity and political independence of member-states, the victors made secure their war gains as assigned to them by the treaty, and showed that the *raison d'être* of the League was the need for a guarantee treaty.

America recognised the danger which lay in thus connecting

a universally conceived peace Covenant with the most brutal and revolutionary of all Europe's peace treaties. It was strong enough to draw the obvious conclusions and so rejected both treaty and Covenant although Article 19 of the Covenant makes it possible to proceed to "a re-examination of treaties which become inapplicable or of international situations whose continuance endangers world peace."

The form of the article is not calculated to save the League from warlike developments and is not likely to loosen the fetters riveted at Versailles, but appears rather to intensify the joint responsibility of the members for them and so to assure the execution of the Peace terms. It is not capable of practical application and is calculated rather to soothe moral scruples than to solve actual issues. To apply it would be to destroy the treaty. The first conditions for this have so far been lacking.

If one regards the Covenant from the strategic point of view one quickly realises that the eccentric position of the five victorious Powers finds expression in it. Britain, France, Italy, Japan and America equally planned the League from the point of view of outlying states. The terms of the Covenant do not apply to the differences in geographical situation of the states which are continental, but to the situation of the insular and maritime states lying on the edge of the continental masses, although Article 8 expressly deals with "the consideration of the geographical position and the special circumstances of each state." The Covenant likewise secures the position of states working on exterior lines and is directed against centrally placed states who depend on the command of interior lines. The strategic grouping of the World War is again visible in the Covenant.

The strategic problems which the Covenant raises are greatly increased by Article 16, which defines the obligations of member-states in case of war. The member-states are pledged thereby to measures which threaten the world with a general war if a member-state, contrary to the obligations assumed under Articles 12, 13 and 15 in regard to the settlement of disputes, refuses to submit the issue to the court of arbitration and the League Council, or disobeys a given decision and engages in war. The member-state in question

must then anticipate being involved in hostilities with all other member-states, and these are bound to break off all commercial and financial relations with it, forbid their citizens to have any relation with its citizens and to interrupt all financial, commercial and personal relations between its citizens and those of any other state, whether or not a member of the League. In this event, the Council is obliged to recommend to the interested states—whether or not League members—what military, naval and aerial effectives the members of the League will each contribute to the force which will be sufficient to enforce respect for the obligations of membership. The member-states further agree, in virtue of this article, to lend each other mutual support in the application of economic and financial measures to reduce to a minimum the losses and inconveniences that will result. Further, they lend each other mutual support to resist any special measure directed against one of them by the Covenant-breaking state. They take the necessary steps to facilitate the passage across their territories of the forces of any member-state which shares in the common action for the enforcement of Covenant obligations. On this follows Article 17 which says that in the case of a difference between a member-state and a non-member state, or between two non-member states, the non-member state or states will be invited to submit to the obligations which bind member-states. If the invitation is accepted, the mechanism arranged for in Articles 12 to 16 will be set in motion; if it is refused, then the Council will either apply Article 16 or take any other measures to avoid hostilities. The League is thus called upon to intervene in any conflict which arises anywhere in the world.

Dangers realised and unrealised lurk in these provisions. Article 16 implies the abdication of state sovereignty and the provision of military means, without consideration of differences in geographical situations or of the strategic premises of which Article 8 says all too little; and Article 17 keeps open the world temple of Janus.

As the League possesses no armed forces, nor has nominated a League commander-in-chief, nor can entrust leadership to a single militarily-powerful member, it is not able to enter on a campaign at a moment's notice. The neighbours of the out-

lawed state are consequently exposed to attack from an enemy which will not delay to carry the war outside its frontiers and fall on the weaker Power with all its strength. No one can tell what will happen then.

As in Article 11 it is expressly laid down that any war or threat of war, whether a member-state is or is not directly threatened thereby, is a concern of all the members, the aggressor state not only becomes the enemy of all but is able to consider every neighbour as an enemy. It is politically outlawed, but at the same time it is given a licence which confers upon it full strategic freedom of action. The situation of its neighbours is thereby endangered and as, in theory, all members of the League become neighbours—the European members especially and of these the central states are particularly threatened—the danger of war is so greatly increased that all the Powers are compelled to increase their armaments. Simultaneously the interest increases in the possibilities of holding aloof, if a " holy war " is declared.

The Covenant makes no mention of such possibilities, but no state can renounce the liberty to take its own final decision if it is threatened by war, which the League was created to avoid, and yet was unable to dispense with the threat of a " holy war." If this article is regarded from the strategic viewpoint another door becomes visible through which war can enter. Article 12 declares that all differences capable of leading to a rupture must be submitted either to arbitration or to an enquiry by the Council, and members are expressly pledged in no case to have recourse to war until three months have elapsed from the giving of the decision of the arbitration court or the report of the Council. This provision, by imposing delay, has a great influence on the preparation of military measures. It tempts a state which is determined, or feels itself inexorably compelled, to appeal to the sword, to a lightning stroke if that is demanded by the strategic situation; or, if taken advantage of, the three months' delay puts it in a position to complete its preparations and seize any lucky opportunity afforded.

Not the differences which in Article 13 are to be submitted for settlement to judicial procedure, but the cases which, according to Article 15, go before the Council and which

involve the honour and existence of nations, threaten the states with a general war. Each state will retain the power of deciding on its attitude if ever such a case arose. If it is a member of the Council it can in the vote, which needs to be unanimous in the declaration of responsibility, protect the guilty by its vote. Not only will a strong state so act when it seeks to protect a weak state with which, outside the bounds of the League, it is allied, but a weak state will act similarly if it feels itself threatened by a strong state within the bounds of the League. However the votes fall and whatever security there is that the true aggressor shall be discovered, freedom of action will remain the supreme law for a threatened state and no other but itself will decide whether it is to declare war at once and send men and ships, or hold itself ready to draw the sword when sentence is passed if the decision given runs counter to its interests.

Article 16 is in reality only a threat. If a member-state ventures to defy the threat and have recourse to war, the whole edifice collapses. The same follows in the case of non-members who, in spite of Article 17, are compelled to demand freedom of action as far as the League is concerned. The most terrible wars ever waged were the holy wars which the Greeks fought under the auspices of Delphi, and were wars conducted by a league of nations.

The whole Covenant is only comprehensible when one returns to the creation of the League and its connection with the World War and the peace treaties and again realises that the Covenant continues the strategic grouping of the World War.

Thanks to their position, states on the edge of a continental mass have a geographical advantage over central states who, threatened by their position with encirclement, always run the risk of becoming a military highway or a field of battle. Germany, the central state of Europe, always became one or other if the foe was not stopped at the frontier. This condition is immutable. Only if it is possible to add to a central Power the strategic advantages of an outlying Power by joining such a Power, is it possible to counteract the disadvantages of a central position. But to do this means usually subordination to the new ally.

History teaches us that alliances between outlying and central states are never lasting and that the outlying state is more favourably placed in case of war and makes the lesser sacrifice. It is on this that Britain's extraordinary position has been built up. The island-kingdom has shed its blood in all the coalition wars, sent its resources to battle, brought foreign armies to fight on foreign soil and concluded peace at the moment which seemed to itself most suitable, whether or no its continental ally had realised the ambition to realise which it went to war. Only in the World War did she stake everything and now is caught in the net of a far-flung coalition.

The alliance of Spain with the House of Austria was a dynastic one and strategically was not the alliance of an outlying with a central Power, for both Powers made use of Italy, and so were able to work on exterior lines. Every time France was able to break that connecting line the Spanish-Austrian power tottered.

Still more significant is the strategic situation that arose as regards France, Britain, Prussia, Austria and Russia when the Anglo-French colonial war and the Seven Years' War developed into the first general war. England was then bound to the centre of the Continent by Hanover, and so was assailable. Frederick the Great first understood the position. When he was threatened by Austria with a war of revenge, he made an offer to England to protect Hanover in case of war, and so joined his own security to that of Hanover and north-west Germany. The "Security Pact" concluded at Westminster in 1756, was not directly directed against France, but was regarded by the King as covering himself against attack. Frederick, in fact, hoped to renew the existing treaties with France and to get France to renounce an attack on Hanover. Thus he thought to keep the war out of north-west Germany, secure his own flank and have a free hand in the decisive struggle with Austria. But he was deceived. France would not give away the strongest card she held in her quarrel with Britain. She passed into the Austrian camp, the way to which was opened by the policy of Kaunitz.

This *renversement des alliances* saw accordingly on both sides an outlying state allied to a central one. And again it was seen that the outlying state could leave the alliance whenever

it seemed advisable to do so. Britain left Prussia in the lurch in 1762, after she had conquered Canada, and France parted from Austria in order to make peace with Britain. Russia, the third outlying Great Power which had entered the war, likewise acted according to her own pleasure. Till the death of the Tsarina Elizabeth she fought on the side of Austria and France, changed sides under Peter III, and after Peter's death retired into neutrality in order to realise her eastern ambitions. Only the two central states, Austria and Prussia, stood fighting a life and death battle until Maria Teresa yielded to her unconquerable foe.

Easily concluded, of longer duration and, indeed, often impossible to dissolve, are alliances between Powers in the same geographical situation, though here, too, the advantage is on the side of the outlying Powers. Both states fight under the same strategic conditions. The alliances which France made in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries with the Turks, in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries with Russia and the alliance between the Germany of Bismark and Austria-Hungary rested on this secure basis. But the history of the Triple Alliance indicates that the adhesion of an outlying Power to central states is dependent on the maintenance of peace and is easily broken if a coalition of outlying states is in conflict with that of the central states. Italy's departure from the Triple Alliance was decided rather by its geographical position than by its traditional hostility to Austria.

The entry of Turkey into the alliance of the Central Powers, which was completed during the war, does not contradict this law. Turkey actually acted as a central, and not as an outlying, state, since it lay between Russia and the maritime Powers, and defended its capital from the centre. It first became an outlying state when Russia left the European system. It then deserted the Black Sea area and concentrated on the Asia Minor coast and the Anatolian plateau to defend Constantinople and the Dardanelles in this eccentric position as an outer flank.

The definition of " central " and " outlying " depends on circumstances. France first became an outlying state when the Spanish world power was broken and the French won Provence, Aquitaine, Flanders and Burgundy. Even Spain is

not always to be considered an outlying Power. When the Arabs crossed the straits, she lost that position, and when Charles Martel fought at Poitiers he fought the decisive battle of the west on the west glacis of the centrally placed Frankish kingdom on which Saxons and Slavs pressed on the east. France, which in the XIVth and XVth centuries fought for a century with England in order to get rid of the English claims, was not able to make use of the advantages of her outlying position since the English drove the French from the Scheldt and the Garonne and advanced concentrically on Paris. How well France appreciated the value of an outlying position and the dangers of a central one is seen from the policy of Henri IV who, in 1598, at a time, therefore, when Spanish power was declining, concluded with Spain the Peace of Verviers in order to escape from a war on two fronts and advance with all his forces on the Rhine. England and Holland tried in vain to retain him in the war which France and the maritime Powers were waging against Spanish domination. The king answered that England and France could only be attacked by Spain by sea, while France lay exposed to a concentric attack and needed for her defence as many armies as she had provinces ; he was quite ready to go on fighting, but he could not admit that France should be placed at the disposal of anyone to serve as battlefield. A generation later, France's outlying position was assured. Not France, but Germany, became the buffer state of Europe. Nor has the position of Russia always been outlying. As long as the Mongols held her in subjection, and the Golden Horde was in existence on the Volga and the Caspian, the Russians had not the strength to move against the west, but remained exposed to attack from Poland. Similarly with the Turks, when Tamerlane revived the kingdom of Genghis Khan and Bajazet I, the victor over the last army of the Cross at Nicopolis, received the attack of the Mongols at Angora, the first nursery of his people.

The World War has revealed in full clarity and completeness the fundamental strategic conditions which we deduced from geography. For the first time, Europe and the world fought divided into two geographically distinct camps, the central states fighting in alliance against allied outlying states. On one side was Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey ; on the

other France, Russia, Britain, Italy, Belgium, Serbia, Roumania, Greece, Portugal and nations from overseas, an alliance composed entirely of eccentrically situated states. Again, the outlying position was seen to be the more favourable and the war, in spite of the victories in the field of the central states and Germany's unparalleled powers of resistance, was finally settled by geographical conditions.

Unhappily it is impossible to make provisions in a League of Nations which will place the central and outlying states under the same conditions, since under this sameness appears the greatest difference. Article 16 of the League Covenant condemns all the central states to overthrow in fulfilment of their geographically settled destiny.

The reservation which is mentioned in Article 8 regarding consideration of the geographical position and special circumstances of each state, cannot alter the position, since, if this reservation is made a real one, the League breaks down in so far as it is not released from its compulsory relation to the Versailles settlement, and so long as a state of peace is not created which knows nothing about victors and vanquished and places Germany and the other partitioned states once again in possession of their rights and their national territory. The reservation would perhaps not have been made in the case of a treaty between outlying Powers, had not the states, created from the territory of the defeated central Powers and pledged to the service of the victors, been themselves confronted with the disadvantages of a central position. Czechs and Poles share the dangers which are concealed in the heart of the Continent. But they have received double aid, first from their union with France, who met their wishes because she required them to maintain her hegemony and, secondly, in the disarmament of the defeated Powers which is only comprehensible by reference to the new states.

Since the World War discharged its violence on the head of Germany, and Germanism has not only been driven from a position of power but also from a state of peace which allowed Central Europe to continue the struggle to preserve its territory and relying on Germany's national strength and political greatness to expand in freedom, the conviction cannot be escaped that the actual state system and the future of

Germany are so closely related that the vital connection between them can no longer be doubted.

The Versailles dictators already showed this because they have changed the European system which, since the rise of the feudal kingdoms to national states or to geographically-defined communities, had practically completed the unification of the European continent and the coasts opposite it, into a knot of states in defiance of the laws of geography. Europe to-day is weak in the centre. Where once Germany and Austria stood as strong central Powers there is now a chaos of arbitrarily constructed states, and new tensions have been created in a world whose settlement had been attained at the price of long effort. Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey are mutilated; France, Belgium, Italy, Roumania, Serbia, Greece and Denmark have been aggrandised. Britain and Japan have increased their overseas possessions. Poland has arisen again, Czechs, Lithuanians, Letts, Esths and Finns have acquired independence. By the impotence of Germany Europe is more seriously affected than ever by Germany in her days of power, and Europe, in consequence of this, has turned away from the outer world and has to concentrate on the problems thus created. Only the outlying Powers, for which Versailles and the League of Nations created no chains, have retained any freedom of action.

Russia, which by virtue of the Communist revolution, has separated from the European community and the United States, which refused to follow Wilson after his pilgrimage in Europe, are the only Great Powers which to-day can deal with events in Europe from a world point of view. Even Britain, the kernel of a world empire, lies fettered to the European danger zone. She atones to-day for the historic responsibility she assumed when she departed from the policy of William of Orange and of Pitt and permitted the French to return to the Rhine in order to reduce Germany once again to impotence.

The strategic control of the Belgian glacis and the Rhine gives France the power to form front at once against east and north. The French control on the Rhine the gates into Germany, and in Belgium a sally port against Britain. The continental relation between France and Germany and the

world-relation between France and Britain were decisively settled by the return of France to the Rhine. France, under cover of the League of Nations, strives to maintain the hegemony established by the Versailles settlement and—because she cannot do it by her own strength—to secure it by pacts and treaties.

The new organisation of Europe is founded on the condemnation of Germany to impotence. It demands the perpetual curbing of German power. The maintenance of Germany in political impotence is, therefore, an actual condition of the maintenance of the political situation created by the settlement. The moment that Germany refuses to be the object of the policy of the Great Powers and again rises to be a sovereign state the basis of the settlement is broken. We thus recognise that the European problem is conditioned by the central position of Germany. The place of Germany and Germanism in the new state system is now the cardinal problem of European policy and as such influences the whole world.

CHAPTER II

FRANCE AND THE HEGEMONY OF EUROPE

When Rome occupied Gaul and Britain and the valleys of the Danube and the Rhine, there was no intention of upsetting the balance of power, but merely of securing the borders of her Mediterranean empire, which extended from the Pillars of Hercules to the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Even the fateful crossing of the Alpine barrier and the conquest of Gaul was not conceived as continental expansion, but was regarded solely from a Mediterranean standpoint. The Rhine–Rhône line was to the Romans a dominant flank position from which they controlled Gaul, threatened the Germans who remained on the left bank of the Rhine and those who were confined to the right bank and the delta, and held Britain in check. Whoever occupies that position is even to-day master of the western Mediterranean zone and the eastern continental zone and has the Continent at his mercy as far as the Iller and the Weser.

The Continent of Europe first appears as a political area after the declining Roman empire lost Gaul and the Rhine and Danube valleys were separated from the Mediterranean world. The Franks were the first to create a continentally-based state and the descendants of Pepin completed their work. When Charlemagne acquired the Imperial title, the Mediterranean half of Gaul again became predominant at the expense of the Atlantic half, but the conception of the Carolingian empire remained continental. It was firmly established on both banks of the Rhine and its eastern marches ran from the Jutland peninsula to the mouth of the Save as the bulwark of the west against the Slav flood. The division of the heritage of Charlemagne into two empires which the Treaty of Mersen completed on a line running from the mouth of the Meuse to the Lake of Geneva, gave the Continent new internal frontiers. The West Frankish empire in appearance was a reincarnation of pre-Cæsarian Gaul but its political aim

of continental expansion eastward showed that the Cæsarian conception dominated it. The struggle for the Rhine became the dominant factor in European politics. German and Latin met in conflict. The conception of a universal German empire was compelled to defend itself on the Rhine against French nationalism.

France never let herself be diverted from her continental and Mediterranean policy until she was in complete control of the area between the Ardennes and the Pyrenees, the English Channel and the Mediterranean. Only after the great continental war with England had been finally fought out and Britain had renounced her aim of dominating the Continent and the coasts opposite her islands, did France venture to look oceanwards. But even then the struggle for the Rhine remained the dominant feature of France's policy of hegemony. The French passed the Pyrenees and the Maritime Alps and in their wars with Spain seemed more than once to have changed the direction of French policy, but even in Catalonia and Lombardy the end sought was a continental one. The knowledge inherited from Rome that the possession of the Rhine assures the hegemony of the Continent to a nation defended by the ocean, the Pyrenees and the Alps, remained the permanent guide of French policy. France has never abandoned this conception of hegemony and history is there to tell us that the supreme problem of European geo-politics is to be found in this struggle for the Rhine.

The giant shadow which France to-day casts on the map of Europe is the same shadow, as far as the Rhine is concerned, as was cast by Rome. Julius Cæsar created the Rhine problem. The West Carolingians renewed the Roman claim to the Rhine, the Capetians transformed it to a French claim, the House of Valois gave it an appearance of legality and brought it into the foreground of European politics. At the beginning of the XIVth century Germanism in the Rhône valley and at the sources of the Scheldt yielded to the French invader ; at its end France had secured the approach to the German river. The Saône was reached, the upper course of the Meuse crossed, the Flemish region, into which the great North German plain gently sinks, became the northern glacis of France. In the middle of the XVth century French armies advanced to

the Upper Rhine and demanded the river as the eastern frontier of France.

In the XVIth century the Rhine problem was merely one factor in the conflict between the House of Habsburg and the House of Valois, but nevertheless, the French, in alliance with German princes, appeared before Metz and took it, captured Toul and Verdun and threatened Strassbourg. The Lorraine plateau fell into French hands, the pass of Zabern was opened, the duchy of Lorraine was in danger. The empire of Charles V collected all its strength but failed to recover Metz. When Charles died, the Spanish and the Austrian domains of the Habsburgs parted. The Rhine became the western frontier of Germany. The Swiss Confederation freed itself from the German empire of the Habsburgs, the Netherlands became a free republic and so the regions lying around the mouth and the sources of the Rhine were lost to the Empire. The Rhine became the French objective in order that, based upon it, they might secure entry to the Holy Roman Empire. Henri IV interfered in the confessional disputes of Cologne and Strasbourg and emphasised the claims of the House of Valois as the national demands of France.

When the Thirty Years' War broke out in Germany, France prepared for a methodical advance to the Rhine. The policy of Richelieu is the classic expression of French expansionism. It reaped the fruits of the victories of Gustavus Adolphus and Bernhard of Weimar and cut off Alsace from disunited Germany. France established herself in Breisach on the right bank of the Rhine, threw her shadow over Switzerland, devastated Lorraine, threw herself on the Spanish Netherlands and Franche Comté, and the moment she set foot on the banks of the Upper Rhine, saw herself heir to the hegemony of Europe. The Peace of Westphalia left open to her the roads into the Empire, the unity of the Rhine valley was broken, and the need to secure the conquered territory compelled her to cross the river.

The Rhine policy of France developed into an undisguised war of conquest. Germany was so enfeebled that she narrowly escaped dissolution. With her *débâcle* begins the period of unrest in Europe which was never subsequently allayed. It caused the demand for the maintenance of the

balance of power which could only be found on the Rhine. William III, the Prince of Orange who was also an English king, paved the way for the recognition of that fact, though he himself only recognised it as the aim of the struggle when Louis XIV had obtained the strategical advantage. Under Louis, the French took Strasbourg, broke into the Spanish Netherlands, made war on Holland, created the first coalition against their policy, and filled the valleys of the Rhine and the Rhône with campaigns which culminated in the devastation of the Palatinate and the dissolution of the sentiment of German unity. The French conception of power acquired a universal character which had nothing in common with the transcendental and mystical conceptions of the Germanic Empire, but aimed at imposing French rule on the peoples of Europe.

Britain, for her own preservation, threw herself into the life and death struggle for the Rhine, and the XVIIIth century saw a change in the course of events. The War of the Spanish Succession and the Peace of Utrecht barred to Louis XIV the way to a world empire such as the French conceived, but it left him territorial possessions for which it had been well worth fighting. He held the great strategic line of invasion, Strasbourg–Metz–Lille and overlordship over the client states of the Rhine. Imperialist France was firmly established on the river, and therefore, in a position of continental supremacy. Her policy brought together west and east—Poland, Sweden and Turkey—against Germany and pressed hard on Britain while it divided Germany by alliances of the various petty states. With difficulty Prussia saved herself from the chaos while Austria withdrew from the Rhine. Under the successors of Richelieu and Louis XIV, the Rhine valley was no less the objective of French expansionism or less striven for than under the *Roi Soleil* himself. The War of the Polish Succession gave France possession of the rest of Lorraine, the War of the Austrian Succession saw her in possession of the Flanders glacis and the line of the Weser. Germany was driven from the Rhine and thrown back on the Elbe where Frederick the Great fixed the frontiers of Prussia in order to consolidate his state on the Oder, while Britain fought overseas for world-dominion.

The Seven Years' War saw the Rhineland and the line of

the Rhine, the Weser and the Main in French hands until Britain found in Pitt a statesman who took up the task of William III, and Frederick the Great freed himself from the menace of Austria and Russia to crush the French invader at Rossbach. The " panic fear " which drove the French from Thuringia marks the moment when French expansionism was forced to retreat and the moral pressure of France on Germany was broken. France saw herself driven from the Elbe over the Weser. When Frederick made peace with Austria, England had already parted from him, while France had consolidated her position on the Rhine, changed her front and planned the renewal of war with Britain, so that, with her unassailable invasion base and flank position on the Rhine, she might settle the war of Titans between French and British imperialist ambition. The war for the Rhine had become a war for world dominion.

Her internal difficulties prevented France from resuming the conflict, but she never lost sight of her aim. She fought on the side of the American colonies against Britain in order to strike her rival a deadly blow in the new world, and only ceased to pursue that policy when the Revolution crippled her power. But the idea which found triumphant expression in 1789, brought not only salvation to the French people but passed over her frontiers, helped by the instinctive expansionism of France. Before it the world stood aghast. The monarchs concluded defensive alliances ; emigrés and revolutionaries called to war ; revolution and reaction met in battle. The cannon of Valmy mark " an epoch in world history." France used the campaign of the monarchs against the revolution to make a return in arms to the Rhine which flung the whole Rhineland into confusion. The historic Rhine policy of France culminated in the conquest of Belgium, Holland, and the entire left bank of the river.

The wars of the Revolution became imperialist wars which extended French power to the eastern edge of the Rhineland. Napoleon conquered the Rhine on the Adige and at Marengo severed the Rhineland completely from Germany. The European balance of power was destroyed to its foundations, for France held the river from source to mouth and also the Danubian plain, the gates of the Main and the Saale and the

Osning pass. The Rhineland was once again in the possession of a single Power and actually in that of a Cæsar of Latin race who, reviving the old Cæsarian scheme, held Britain in check therefrom. France was master in Germany and thereby master of the European mass whose frontiers run from the Kurisches Haff to the Carpathians. Europe was withdrawn from British influence, Britain thrown back into her island position. Although technically the French blockade of Britain was incomplete and the British fleet commanded the seas, Austerlitz and Jena outweighed Abukir Bay and Trafalgar.

Britain tirelessly pursued the struggle—she could do nothing else except surrender—and the war for the Rhine faded from Napoleon's vision. He conquered Europe in order to conquer Britain. Nevertheless, the basis of his power was still the security of his hold on the Rhineland. From it he threatened the world. When, conquered by the elements, he returned from Russia, he fought successfully in the key region between the Oder and the Elbe in front of the Saale pass until, conquered by the sacrifice of the awakened nations at Leipzig, he had to leave Germany for ever. He was compelled to retire at once behind the Rhine since, in the Rhine valley, the German revolt was ablaze, and, with the loss of the glacis on the right bank, his base for offensive action disappeared and with it French hegemony. But neither Napoleon nor France thought of renouncing the Rhineland and when in 1840 Napoleon's ashes were brought back to Paris France again laid claim to Belgium and the Rhine.

The last Bourbons, Charles X and Louis Philippe, renewed the French claim to the Rhine and Napoleon III adopted the policy of " compensations " in order to recover it. In the sixth decade of last century the French demand for the German river was no longer pressed as in the days of Louis XIV and Napoleon I by brute force, but, as Richelieu advised, indirectly, though the handling of it was feebler. It was Bismark who tore the veil from French ambition and summoned Germany to war for the national unity which the river symbolised and of which it was the basis. Thus in the war for the Rhine was fought the war for German unity and in both the war for a real European balance of power, a condition of which was a strong German state in the centre of Europe.

Then came the Franco-German war. It at once passed from the narrowness of the battlefield to the broad ways of policy and ended with the recovery by Germany of Alsace and the Lorraine plateau and the creation of the German Empire. This time imperialist France could not avoid renunciation—the two provinces saw themselves torn from the newly established indivisible republic—but protest followed on renunciation. The Peace of Frankfurt was only an armistice *sine die*. The continuity of French policy was broken neither by revolution nor defeat. Even the Commune maintained the claim to the "natural frontiers." France could not abandon her Rhine policy, for her will to power had not been weakened and drove the nation ever back to the Rhine, since here lay the key position of her imperialism which sent forth a summons which she could not disregard save by denying her past history.

After the war France formed her policy neither according to the new conditions nor with new aims. She acted just as in 1715, in 1763, and in 1815, and devoted herself to reconstruction in order to win back her losses and again satisfy her will to power. As the war for the Rhine was not fought to a finish the course of events in the future was fundamentally governed by the indelible opposition between Germany and France. Germany's policy was therefore immovably fixed.

In 1871, thanks to the interest of the Great Powers in maintaining the European balance of power, France was saved from burdensome peace terms. Bismark demanded from the Republic neither disarmament nor unlimited tribute. The reconstruction of France consequently was unhindered. For four years France hesitated between the re-establishment of a constitutional Bourbon monarchy and the establishment of the Republic, deciding finally for the Republic which was more suited than was a monarchist restoration to plutocratic development and the creation of a ruling oligarchy. As the Republic at the beginning was conservative in outlook it was easy for it to establish new relations with the Powers surrounding Germany. Conquered France returned to that policy of alliances which she follows feverishly in moments of weakness.

In 1887 she felt herself strong enough to emerge from her reserve and listen again to the call of the Rhine. When she won the Russian alliance and came to an agreement with

Britain on the Mediterranean question she was again ready to fight for the river. But she waited patiently for the hour when she could make war under favourable conditions. It struck when an eastern crisis was added to British-German and German-French antagonism and Russia, using the Austro-Serb dispute, gave the signal for battle by ordering general mobilisation.

The great crisis of imperialism, by a tragic combination of circumstances, burst like a storm upon Germany. The war for the Rhine appeared joined to the entirely opposite problem of the Straits and, thanks to the British-German antagonism, appeared in the guise of a war involving the entire world. It was the first universal breakdown of the age of imperialism, but at the same time it is really the continuation by a world war of the struggle for the balance of power which is fought out on the Rhine. From the day of its outbreak, France considered the World War as the final battle for the Rhine. It is true, of course, that the war was not fought solely for the Rhine, but it was based on the indestructible hostility which for centuries had armed Germany and imperialist France one against the other and had always reserved for insular Britain by her own desire a place in the battle line. France from the beginning considered the war as one for the Rhine, but, in consequence of that, she also considered it as one for existence, not that she feared to be destroyed, but because she cannot conceive of a France that is not dominant, and domination depends on control of the Rhine valley. When, supported by the whole Anglo-Saxon world, she returned again to the Rhine, she grasped in consequence the sceptre of Europe.

France's will to power regards the state only as a means to domination. As domination for France is rooted in possession of the Rhine, she has coveted this since the beginning of her history. But to-day it is not in the guise of a champion of freedom that she demands and defends the Rhineland ; she clothes her claim in modern dress and demands it as a base of operations without which she cannot live in security. The change is not due to a desire to obscure the real issues but to a real feeling of insecurity. France knows that she can no longer hold her forward position on the Rhine by her own strength. She seeks to secure her conquests, not just the

security of that position in Europe which has been assigned to her by nature and which her genius has made her own, a position which of the Rhineland gives her only the upper course of the Moselle and the Meuse.

Of all the wars which France has waged for the Rhine, none displayed its aim so plainly and comprehensively as the World War. It ended disastrously for Germany because Britain believed the principle of the balance of power to be in danger from Germany, and because the war was represented not as a war for the Rhine but as one against German aggression. For that reason Britain on August 30, 1914, adjured defeated France to stand fast on the Marne and yielded to her every wish in secret treaties. When, on September 7th, Germany withdrew from what was to have been a decisive battle because strategic doubts had crippled the power of decision of the High Command, she acted contrary to the real nature of the war, which under the mask of an eastern war and in the guise of a universal clash of imperialism had summoned her again to the historic conflict for the Rhine and tolerated no turning aside, forgave no faintheartedness. Russia's sacrifice, the British expenditure of men and resources, the help of America decided the victory of the French ambitions. Not only did France return to the Rhine by a second conquest of Alsace and Lorraine but she established her rule in the Saar basin, the Palatinate, the Rhineland, the Neuwied basin and at the mouth of the Ruhr. The military occupation was equivalent to strategic possession. Three years after the conclusion of peace, Britain was condemned to impotence in Europe, Germany once again had sunk to be merely an object of French policy and the peace of Europe was delivered over again to France's policy of imperialism.

French policy feared no consequences and used the favourable circumstances of the hour, leaving disarmament to her allies, and increasing her own armaments. Neither strength nor resources were lacking to her. When with her Allies she returned triumphantly to the Rhine she had a population of only 39,000,000, but her colonial empire held such resources of man power that from the military point of view she had a population of 100,000,000. She bound Poland, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia to herself by loans, signed treaties with

all the vassal states which had put themselves in her power, and turned to making her occupation of the Rhineland permanent. As in the past the Palatinate and the Rhineland were kept in subjection by the edicts of French generals and the "defaults" of Germany were the pretext for "sanctions," which meant the extortion of enormous tribute in money and kind and the occupation of important strategic points. The Rhenish tricolour, first hoisted by Hoche, was again brought out, pressed into the hands of separatist elements and flown again to the slogan of *l'idée rhénane*. France lent every conceivable support to the movement for the separation of the Rhineland from Germany and made her whole policy in the East the instrument of her policy on the Rhine. In two years she succeeded in obtaining the bridgeheads of Düsseldorf, Ruhrort and Duisburg and therewith the door of the Ruhr. She brought pressure to bear on the inhabitants, causing a moral *débâcle* and inducing them to hoist a flag of their own and set up a buffer state. She prepared to support them but at the same time was ready to abandon them if the political situation demanded a change of front. The spread of French literature, the establishment of French banks, the building of barracks and the settling of French families—all was part of the policy of "pacific penetration" which did not shrink from using terrorism in order to make an impressive display of French power. France's hegemony was established on both banks of the Rhine; the industrial servitude of Germany and the creation of a Rhenish client-state seemed assured.

The Treaty of Versailles had become another Peace of Westphalia. Interpreted by French subtlety and enforced by French military power, it had opened to France the way to the heart of the German empire. The times of Louis XIV had returned. France no longer needed the *doulce et couverte conduite* of Richelieu to advance again to the Rhine. Alsace, which had remembered its political past and had willingly abandoned itself to the conqueror who brought with him food and peace, had to take the consequences, to sacrifice to the French ideal of the centralist state its German character, its native speech and its desires for autonomy; the Saar was economically made French and the Palatinate and the Rhineland entered still more intimately into the French sphere.

The strength of the French position is seen not only in the French hegemony on the Continent but in the influence she was able to exercise on the Mediterranean and in the states of the Levant. France lent powerful aid to the Turkish independence party in its struggle with Greece, the protégé of Britain, and aided Kemal Pasha to drive the Greeks from Asia Minor. She established herself in Syria in a flank position between Egypt and Mesopotamia, secured the communications between her North African colonies and Nigeria and Cameroons and displaced the influence of Italy, Spain and Britain on the coast of Morocco. She entered into closer relations with Serbia and Roumania and once again, supported by old claims but forgetting old obligations, cast her shadow over Holland and Switzerland.

But the proud edifice from which France surveyed a troubled Europe had not such secure foundations as it seemed to have. The French position depended on a happy combination of circumstances and was maintained by the political will and energy of the French nation and yet France no longer had the vital strength which was necessary to protect it. France stood isolated in the world which she dominated and her position of supremacy was no longer maintained, as in the days of Louis XIV, Robespierre and Napoleon I, by her own overpowering strength, but by the exhaustion, weakness and distraction of others.

The maintenance of the unstable French position was before all dependent on the development of her general relations with Britain. The balance of power as Britain ordered it, had been in British opinion threatened by the rise of Germany to be a world power, but now it was utterly destroyed by the complete reversal of conditions and the collapse of the European state system. The opposition throughout the world of Britain and France, apparently determined in advance in France's favour, has assumed gigantic proportions and has been created solely by the return of France to the Rhine, since on the domination of the Rhine depends the hegemony of the French.

If we examine the internal basis of French power we cannot but admire the way in which her constructive efforts on the Continent and on the Mediterranean have been harmonised.

Since the days of Louis IX France has included the Mediterranean area in her sphere of conquest and has never renounced the primacy of her claims in Syria, Egypt and Tunisia. Louis's landing in Cyprus, his crusade in the Nile valley and his death before Carthage have remained in the memory of the French people. Napoleon's heroic adventure in Egypt, the establishment of French rule in Algeria by the last Bourbon, the conquest of Tunisia and Morocco and the acquisition of Syria are the continuation of a historic policy. Cyprus and Egypt are lost, but the possession of the north-west land mass of Africa outweighs the loss. The French genius has treated the Mediterranean conquests not as an overseas empire but as the prolongation of the continental base. The western Mediterranean has become a French lake. The frontiers of France have been carried outside Europe and link her possessions in North Africa to the French coast.

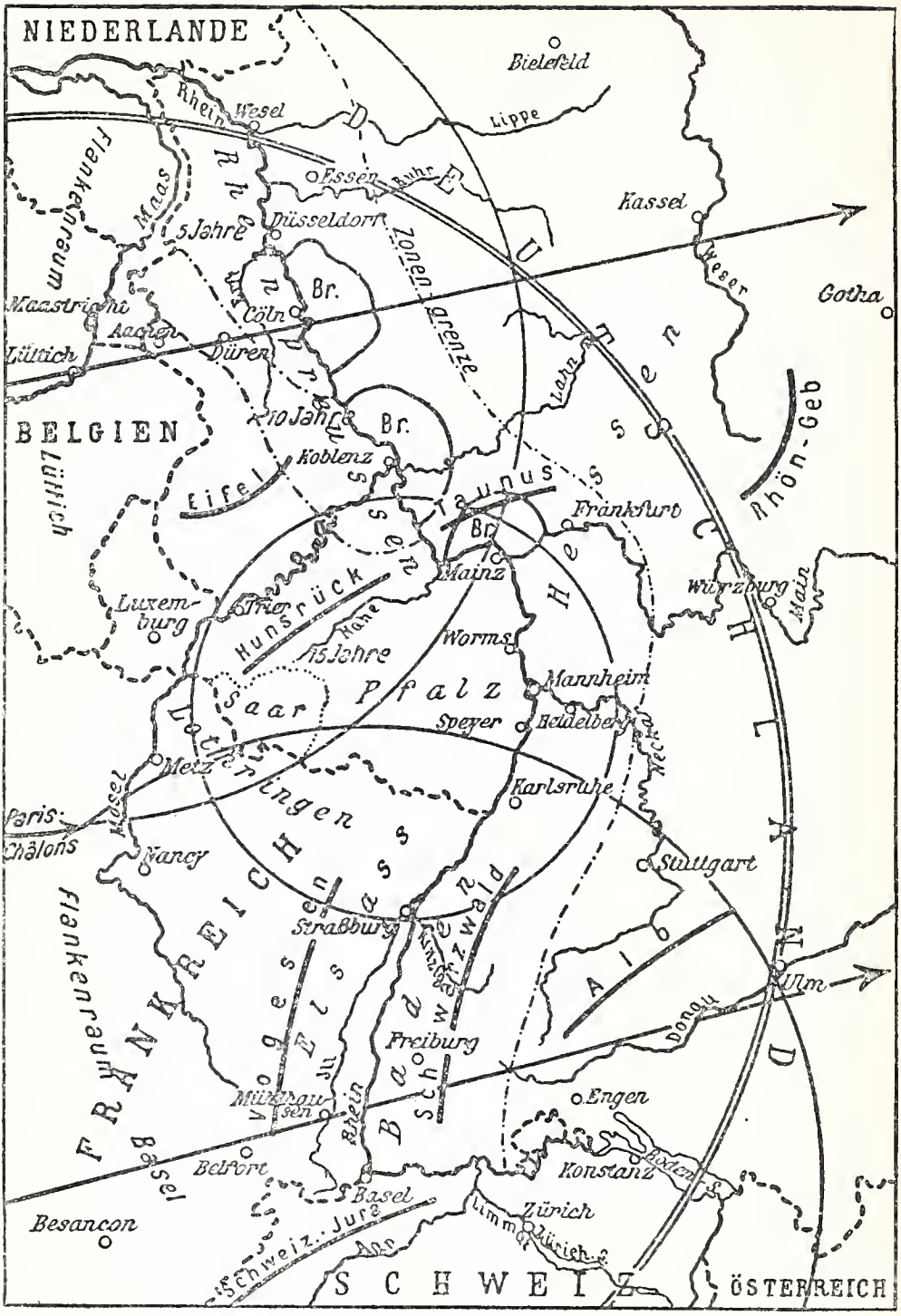
French power reaches from the Rhine to the Niger. The maritime triangle Bizerta–Marseilles–Agadir is the complement of the triangle Brest–Marseilles–Liège. Strassbourg and Fez are thus strategically connected. The Niger is the extreme line of the great river-system between the Rhine and the Equator. Marseilles from being on the margin of the French sphere has become its centre. The circle which with Lyons as centre seeks to define this sphere runs from the Strait of S. Bonifacio to the English Channel and from the Pyrenees to the Bavarian uplands. France's colonial policy is part of her continental policy. Her colonial empire is now actually a buttress of her dominant position in Europe. This was clearly indicated when in 1912 she cleverly placed her Channel coast under the protection of the British fleet and concentrated her naval forces in the Mediterranean. England's action was taken in the spirit of the *Entente cordiale* and under the impression made by the German fleet in the North Sea. In 1923 the German fleet was at the bottom of the sea and the *Entente cordiale* had become a prison. The strategic situation was less favourable to Britain than to France. The submarine, long range coastal batteries and aircraft assured the French coast against her ally and was a more dangerous threat to that ally's coast than the fleet. The French ships were kept in the Mediterranean to keep that line of communication open which

unites the old France and the new in one great military empire.

When the Roman empire fought on the Rhine, the Roman reserves were on the Po ; the reserves of the French empire are in Algeria, and the host of warlike colonial peoples in the Sahara, on the Senegal and in the Sudan are in the strategic area of the European theatre of war. Consequently, so long as her African empire is maintained, France is strong enough to use her numerical superiority in Europe, to feed her imperialist policy with fresh blood and to make one her Mediterranean and her Atlantic zone. At will she can throw her black reserves on the Rhine or her French reserves on the African coast.

France, after the advance to the Rhine, is the most suitable area in Europe from which attacks can be made ; the fact which gives her continental superiority. She can issue in any direction from her Seine position, impregnably defended by a triple mountain ring. She occupies the whole area bounded by the Pyrenees, the Mediterranean, the Maritime Alps, Mont Blanc, the Jura, the Vosges, the Ardennes, the Channel and the Atlantic. She holds the whole Rhine–Rhône line, the oldest line of movement on the Continent, and is securely placed on the strategic sally port of the Lorraine uplands and in the Main central position before the gates of Germany. She holds the Piedmont passes under surveillance, has forced the Rhône gate, opened the Burgundy gates up to the Rhine, and brought within range of her guns the roads leading to the Hegau and the undefended passes of the Black Forest. Strasbourg, the historic citadel of Germany, has again become a French offensive position, the battle area which opens out on the banks of the Breusch, the Weiss and the Queich in front of Zabern and the old Speyergau are transformed into an extensive war-camp. The Palatinate from which the Germans issued in 1870 in a retaliatory attack is marked out as the offensive base of the Rhine army which commands the valley of the Neckar and the Main gates as far as the Tauber. This offensive position had not been weakened by the withdrawal begun in 1925 from the Ruhr to the Moselle and the Lahn.

The possession of the Rhine bridgeheads opens to the master of the left bank of the Rhine the way into central



THE FRENCH BASE OF OPERATIONS ON THE RHINE IN 1924.

Germany if the Germans are not able to defend against the attacker the Black Forest passes, the area around the mouth of the Main, the line of the Diemel and the Osning defiles. The Rhine is as little a strategic frontier as it is a natural one. The place where the issue is decided is not the Rhine area but in front of the passes of the surrounding hills. Since the days of Cæsar and Ariovistus the great battles have been fought here. As to-day the approach to the Rhine is forbidden to the Germans even on their own territory, they are able to march neither to the Black Forest passes nor to the Lippe. The strategic blow struck at them by the creation by the Versailles settlement of a 50 kilometre-wide neutral zone is without parallel in history. Thereby Germany strategically lies open to invasion as far as the Weser and the Iller.

To-day the Rhine from the point of view of military geography is far more in the French area than it appears from a political map. Even if Germany possessed a great army she could not hope even to strike westwards from Minden and Würzburg where she fought the decisive battles with the French in the Seven Years' War and the Revolutionary Wars. This is the base of French hegemony. As the Versailles treaty was described as a European charter and was recognised as such by the League of Nations and as Germany was excluded from the League, the neutralisation of the Rhineland, carried through on German territory, appeared as an act of violation which is unparalleled in history, but it surrounded France's domination with the semblance of universal recognition.

For the maintenance of this dominant offensive position France needs flank protection on every side. To-day she has it in full measure. Never was France's north frontier so secure from violation, never were the mountain ramparts of the Jura and the Maritime Alps threatened by so few dangers. The attractive power of France works the more strongly on her neighbours to north and south, the more firmly she is established on the Rhine.

Belgium has in consequence been forced to union with the chief continental Power, Holland is set aside, Italy and Switzerland see themselves forced to historic renunciations on the Lake of Geneva and the Alps. After the war settlement France needs

no more security however much she desires it. She is protected from every threat, since the east glacis of her position has been advanced 50 kilometres beyond the Rhine, the north glacis is defended at the Ardennes and the Meuse by Belgium, the south-eastern glacis is removed from the hills of Savoy and the Rhône valley to the Swiss frontier, and the Alpine passes from the Upper Dora Baltea to Monaco are in French hands.

The main lines of movement of France's continental policy run right through the centre of Europe. The north-south line connects Antwerp, Paris and Lyons with Marseilles and Oran, the west-east line runs from Paris *via* Strasbourg, Mainz, Prague to Warsaw. The former she controls from the centre, the latter from the flank.

France would not be able to control these lines, which we can call the great European transversals, from her centre if the historic flank positions were as strongly held as of old. To-day, however, Germany is shattered and lies in impotence, the flank area in the Netherlands has disappeared into the French sphere and Switzerland is surrounded on three sides. This wide flank security permits France to advance the centre of gravity of her power further inland than at any time except in the days of Napoleon. Then that centre was on the Inn and the Elbe and, after the turning of the Bohemian citadel in 1807, on the Oder. But Napoleon was threatened in the north by Britain, British fleets controlled the Mediterranean, and he knew nothing of reserves in Africa. The disarmament of Germany, the dissolution of Austria, the confinement of Italy in the eastern Alpine zone, the confinement of England to the cliffs of Dover and her overseas possessions, the control of the Rhine–Rhône line and the positions that flank it, the Alps and the Netherlands, and the inclusion in her empire of the African sources of man power—these are what gives France the strategic superiority on the Continent. This unparalleled accretion of favourable circumstances determined France to extend her hegemony over Europe, a hegemony willingly conceded to her by the new states of the Continent.

Nevertheless, since her advance to the Rhine, France feared for her security. She feared not merely the unknown future but was ill content with the present illumined though it was by the sun of victory. The problem of security she treats

historically and proves the justice of her demand for it by instancing the invasions and devastations which she has experienced. The idea of invasion is not connected with the wars she waged with England on French soil nor with the battles in which she fought the Spanish on the Garonne, the Rhône and the Meuse, but solely with the campaigns which the Germans conducted in the French marches—especially the wars of the Revolution, the last campaigns of Napoleon, the Franco-Prussian War and the four years of the World War. Since the Thirty Years' War the French have fought ten great wars on German soil and have passed through every German territorial unit from the Saar to the Memel and from the Roer to the March, but they demand, after the terrible experience of modern war, that their land for the future be exposed to no threat of danger. If fate calls them to war again they do not wish to fight on their own soil nor to march to a battle on their frontier, but to begin at the glacis which the enemy has provided for them. The French intend to fight on the right bank of the Rhine and relying on a Rhenish base of operations to overthrow Germany on her own territory or to use her as a military highway if Poland seeks French help against Russia or against Germany herself. That is the strategic meaning of the security demand.

This leads us to the heart of the problem. The strategic position which to-day, thanks to the treaty, France possesses, makes her not only master of the European theatre of war, but even in peace time guarantees her position of hegemony as long as she can bear the burdens thereby imposed on her and arms to the teeth. The demand for security is by no means bound up with securing possession of the left bank of the Rhine by advancing her frontier to the stream itself, or by the creation of a Rhenish buffer state dependent upon her. The demand is on the contrary imperialistic.

France thought out this grandiose conception when the annexation of the left bank was refused at Versailles by Britain and America and when Lloyd George had to withdraw from the alliance offered by Wilson and himself because the United States Senate rejected both alliance and treaty. It has never been presented in all its nakedness, but it emerges like a spectre from all the Allied conferences since 1919.

France entered the war with the idea of recovering Alsace and Lorraine. The war had not finished its second year before her ambitions increased and she demanded the frontiers laid down by the first Peace of Paris. In the third year she demanded the Saar and the Queich. When Wilson brought the United States into the war France received a guarantee of the return of Alsace and Lorraine from her new ally. The war for the Rhine was thus concealed under a universally acknowledged *revendication*. Wilson having characterised the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine by Germany as a wrong done to France, and Britain having at the beginning of the war declared herself ready to support the French demand, as long as France held out, France's war for Alsace and Lorraine appeared thenceforward as a war for justice. It stood apart from the complex of France's Rhenish demands. From January 9, 1918, when Wilson announced France's " right to Alsace and Lorraine," the French fought no longer for the old conquests of Louis XIV which for two centuries had served as the springboard of imperialist conquest, but for her " security," and expressed her conviction that that could only be guaranteed by the severance of the whole left bank from Germany. When the end came and Germany, confiding in Wilson, laid down her arms, France demanded its annexation on this ground : the demand for the Rhine was formulated as a defensive measure.

Thereupon Britain recognised that greater dangers were threatened by a France established on the Rhine than ever Germany had threatened. The Allies armed for a diplomatic struggle for the river. Britain and America refused the annexation of the left bank to France. France at once began her great campaign for " security."

On November 26, 1918, she informed Britain that she needed strategic guarantees and demanded the Saar and the southern Palatinate ; two days later Foch handed in a note in which was demanded the separation of the left bank from Germany, the conscription of its population for service against Germany, the occupation of all the bridgeheads on the right bank and the creation on that bank of a neutral zone. Policy and strategy stood shoulder to shoulder on the recaptured offensive position of Alsace and Lorraine in order to restore

France's old hegemony on the Rhine to the alarm cry of "Security." The struggle was for the security of the French base of operations on the Rhine. Lloyd George and Wilson were thrown on the defensive. On March 12, 1919, France made new demands, to wit, that Germany be required to renounce her sovereign rights to the left bank and that her tariff barrier be moved to the east thereof, culminating in the demand that the bridgeheads on the right bank be protected by a glacis 50 kilometres wide on which the Germans should not be permitted to erect fortifications nor maintain troops, nor undertake any kind of military preparation. France thus proposed to force Germany's political frontier east of the Rhine and her strategic frontier beyond the hills on the right bank and to remove directly or indirectly 40,000 square kilometres from Germany's territory.

Wilson and Lloyd George launched a diplomatic counter-attack which shook the very base of the French offensive. They seized on the idea of security which masked France's historic Rhine policy and on March 14th declared that the United States and Britain were ready to hasten without delay to the help of France should she be attacked by Germany. This able move forced France to retreat and induced her on March 17th to declare that she renounced a permanent occupation of the Rhineland and the bridgeheads and would be content with the frontiers of 1814 if the offer of their allies led to the conclusion of a formal treaty. At the same time she contrived by a clever manœuvre to separate Wilson and Lloyd George and to induce the British to join her in the demand for the abolition of conscription in Germany and for the maintenance of a German professional army of not more than 100,000 men. When shortly after she secured not only that the German fortresses should be dismantled, but also that German armaments should remain of the 1919 type, her position was again established and at the same time she had struck a shrewd blow at the armed strength and right of self determination of the German people.

The Clemenceau Cabinet, however, now that Britain and America had refused to satisfy fully France's appetite for annexation, sought new methods and determined to gain its end by a return to Richelieu's *doulce et converte conduite*. It

demanded that the Rhineland occupation should last not five years, but fifteen, and that the evacuation be in three stages. When the Cabinet met on September 25th and Poincaré, the President of the Republic, wished the occupation to last thirty years, Clemenceau tore the veil from the security thesis when he answered: "M. le Président, you are younger than I. I shall not be alive fifteen years from now. But in those fifteen years the Germans will not have fulfilled all the clauses of the treaty. And if you, M. le Président, will do me the honour to visit my grave you will be able to tell me, 'We stand on the Rhine and we remain on the Rhine.'" Clemenceau had reason to be triumphant. France had not annexed the Rhineland, but she stood on the river in her main camp in the Palatinate with a glacis before it which ran for 50 kilometres into the heart of disarmed Germany and based her supremacy in Europe on this classic offensive position.

When the United States Senate rejected alike the Treaty of Versailles and the treaty of alliance and refused to enter the League of Nations, when Lloyd George, alarmed at the opposition of the Dominions and released from his promise by America's decision, also threw over the alliance project, nothing terrible happened to France. The offer of alliance had been nothing but a counter-move which had forced her to abandon her policy of annexation. Lloyd George's withdrawal of it weakened Britain, not France. The French certainly did not feel strong enough to take the responsibility of announcing the annexation of the left bank when British and American armies were cantoned on the Rhine, but they could now plead that America and Britain had refused to help them and that they were compelled themselves to secure their position on the Rhine "for the sake of their security." Now for the first time were they free to interpret the Treaty of Versailles, now they could set up the "security" bogey as an idol and entrust their historic Rhine policy to its protection. The time of subtle exegeses and sanctions had arrived, and opportunity was given for the assumption of the hegemony of the Continent.

Sure of her aim, and free of all jurisdiction, France pursued her way. The withdrawal of the United States from Europe was an advantage to her, and the reverse to Britain. French and British occupied the old positions marked out by Louis

XIV and William of Orange ; the form of their general relations was settled on the Rhine. Behind the negotiations for alliance lurked hereditary enmity. France made the first move in the new game. In December 1921 she made a new alliance proposal to Britain. She secured Britain by the assurance that all depended on a security pact and used the negotiations to strengthen her position on the Rhine and to pursue her policy of hegemony. Her first proposal, for the conclusion of a treaty of mutual assistance if Germany attacked either, failed because it meant really a unilateral obligation on Britain to help France. Then it was further proposed that the alliance should not be confined to the west but should secure support and help for Poland and also that it should be of longer duration. On August 11, 1922, Britain decided to reject this and to offer France a ten years' alliance whereby Britain bound herself to come with her military, naval and air forces to the help of France if Germany directly and without provocation attacked French territory. The French demanded a reciprocal pact, a more definite military agreement and a longer duration. The reciprocity demand being merely one of prestige, the British Cabinet concentrated its attention on the length of the proposed alliance and the military agreement and declared itself ready to negotiate on the former but refused the latter, confining it to the possibility of a permanent contact between the General Staffs.

The French now strained their bow till it snapped. Not merely did they adhere to the demand for a military agreement, not only did they ask for a duration of twenty to thirty years, but they declared that Britain must be ready to fight if Germany entered the neutral zone on the right bank and that the signatories to the treaty be obliged to reach agreement on every question which endangered peace. They knew that they sought what was impossible. When Britain rejected the proposals, Poincaré declared that France was not unconditionally interested in a treaty such as Britain offered and let the negotiations drop. In the interval he prepared for the invasion of the Ruhr. It was the third French offensive.

The occupation of the Ruhr by 60,000 French troops on January 11, 1923, has the character of a manœuvre to coerce Britain, and it is incorrect to treat it as part of the reparations

problem, justified though it was by German "defaults." France compelled Britain to choose between the establishment of French rule on the right bank and the maintenance of French security on the left. The Ruhr invasion was an able attempt to secure the left bank before her strength failed. Her financial resources were no longer able to meet the expenses of hegemony, and the subjugation of North Africa and Syria demanded efforts which had not been thought of in the hour of her triumph. She felt her position in Morocco threatened; she had lost south-west Anatolia and she was fighting in Syria. France invaded the Ruhr to compel Britain to consent to her occupation of the left bank and to complete the ruin of Germany. She went beyond the treaty in order to save her escaping gains or—in the event of a miscarriage of her plans—to return to the treaty and let this retreat appear the conferring of a favour. It came to a retreat. Faced by the resistance of an unarmed population she maintained herself with difficulty in the Ruhr until Britain was willing to resume negotiations. The restoration of the Ruhr was made the price of the desired Anglo-French alliance and Britain was compelled to concessions. Whatever injury France may have done herself economically, politically she gained—witness the negotiations for a Pact of Guarantee begun by Britain in the autumn of 1924. Again, thanks to her dominant position on the Continent, she was able to assume the offensive. She demanded a pact which would assure her against any German attack and also guarantee Poland and Czechoslovakia. In addition she demanded the right to march through Germany if Poland was in danger and the privilege of invading Germany whenever the latter was found guilty of treaty violations. Again she sought to make Britain the guarantor of her hegemony.

When Britain simply declared herself ready to protect France against an unprovoked attack by Germany, the negotiations took a new line. Neither France nor Britain was in a position to complete the tasks they had undertaken in the east, both were wasting their energies in the Rhine dispute and so were compelled to accept a compromise solution. This was secured when Britain let Germany know that a universal pact was needed to ease the dangerous tension in Europe. Germany could not refuse. She was bleeding from her many

wounds, saw herself pressed by Poland in the east and in the west ever more crushed beneath the yoke of a recklessly applied occupation, never secure against new demands and dying of exhaustion. She made the " security " which France sought the fundamental fact of their relations and ably played her part in the game so as not to appear merely as the object of the policy and ambitions of others.

Her decision completely changed the position. Britain saw herself freed from anxiety about the Rhine and able to return to her world policy, while France remembered her legendary rôle as " the bulwark of peace " in order to restore her shattered finances and secure her African domains, and so pressed the security idea into the service of world peace. She contented herself with a treaty, signed by Germany, France, Belgium, Britain and Italy and completed by four arbitration agreements between Germany and France, Poland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia, and in agreement with Britain obliged Germany to enter the League of Nations from which that country had been excluded in 1919.

France had no longer any reason to hold Germany at a distance now that she had completed German disarmament and protected by French bayonets the frontier settlement in the Rhineland, Schleswig, East Prussia and Upper Silesia. On the Rhine she had won more than she could lose. She now stood no longer in an isolated position and had got rid of the danger of being left there; she had failed to obtain a *carte blanche* guarantee from Britain, but she had secured a written agreement signed also by Germany. The signatories guaranteed the maintenance of the *status quo* as far as the Franco-German and Belgo-German treaty positions were concerned, and not only their inviolability but also the maintenance of the demilitarised zones. Thus the basic demands of France's security thesis were conceded. Greater scope, indeed, was allowed to the jurisdiction of the League of Nations and France yielded on the question of the eastern frontiers, yet here too won " security," since Germany, as a League Member under Article 10 of the Covenant, was obliged to respect these and defend them against attack.

French statesmanship had triumphed. The retreat from the Ruhr ended in a concentration on the Treaty of Versailles.

The security thesis had accomplished its mission. France knew that the hour for her renunciation of the annexation of the left bank of the Rhine had struck, but she had surrendered none of her rights and had maintained her prestige.

Whatever may happen in the future, one thing must never be forgotten: the security of France rests not on the forestalled claim on the Rhine, nor on the separate alliances with Great Powers and client states, nor on the joint guarantee of Locarno, but on the recognition to the Germans of room in which to live and the re-establishment of the balance of power which Britain, once its champion, so blindly destroyed at Versailles.

France will, of course, never abandon her struggle for the Rhine. As Louis XIV offered to renounce Neiburg, Breisach and Philippsburg in order to hold Strasbourg the more securely, so France has renounced the Ruhr and agreed to the evacuation of Cologne in order to make Alsace and Lorraine more securely French, to attach the Saar to herself and to maintain her strategically safe offensive position between the Vosges and the Black Forest, the Ardennes and the Taunus, behind the 50 kilometres broad glacis on the right bank of the Rhine.

The French nation has not in vain made itself master of that divinely favoured land between the Pyrenees and the Alps and the sea which has no rival in Europe. That nation appears not undeservedly as a geographical personality of emblematic greatness. Frederick the Great was the first to realise its political significance. He recognised more clearly and described more brilliantly than a scholar could the geo-political conditions which were active in Cæsarian Gaul when he commented ironically on France's continental policy: "In the east she has no other frontier than her sense of moderation and justice." That is still true to-day, although the security pact, founded on a German renunciation, gives peace on the Rhine and the League of Nations watches over that peace as guardian while in the Far East great clouds gather which portend in Eurasia and on the Pacific another turning-point in world history.

CHAPTER III

BELGIUM AS A EUROPEAN POWER

When at the beginning of the XVIIIth century France cast her shadow over Belgium and Switzerland, the Netherlands—to-day partitioned between Holland, Belgium and France—were still in Spanish possession, and under the House of Habsburg. The land ruled by the Prince of Orange defended itself from the French attack and was protected by Britain, but the Belgians remained Austrian till the French Revolution set them free. But independence was still denied them, for the French had no intention of creating a new state on their northern glacis after Louis XIV had held against all Europe the great strategic transversal, Calais–Lille–Strasbourg. After the victory at Fleurus and the final retreat of the Austrians over the Roer, Belgium was incorporated in the French Republic and after the battle of Marengo and the recognition of France's position between the Meuse and the Rhine by the Peace of Lunéville, the ancient German bishopric of Liège was also annexed. The Archbishopric of Cologne lost its fairest diocese to the Archbishopric of Malines. A fateful step had been taken. The north-west of Germany lost the last strip of protecting country and the Meuse glacis was turned from west to east.

As France held the Rhine and Holland held the flank, the event was not noted until a new arrangement of frontiers revealed the change in the strategic position. That happened when the kingdom of the Netherlands, the creation of the Congress of Vienna, fell to pieces and Belgium in 1830 became independent. With the south provinces the Liège gap was lost to the Dutch and Belgium gained a flank position which would threaten Holland and the Rhineland, if ever the French were in possession of Belgium. The Rhineland which had found peace at last in Prussia, was thrown back on the line Aachen–Eupen–Malmedy and the passes of the Ardennes; Holland held with difficulty the bridgehead of Maastricht and Limburg.

Holland fortified the historic Meuse barrier before which

Louis XIV more than once had laid his heavy guns ; Prussia relied on the neutrality of Belgium which she herself had helped to create.

Belgium was a diplomatic creation and her neutrality was a servitude imposed on her since her birth by the Powers. It was more : it was her *raison d'être*. Her destiny was settled just as that of Switzerland had been when the Powers in 1815, recognising the latter's perpetual neutrality, had laid it down that independence of Switzerland of any foreign influence was essential to the true interests of Europe. Belgian neutrality was similarly assured only so long as Belgium remained independent of any foreign influence and European policy was still directed to the maintenance of the balance of power. Belgium could not long keep herself free from such influence. Soon she was brought into the French orbit, but the old Walloon-Flemish battle area remained untrod until the division of Europe produced the World War and the Germans, neglecting political aspects and obeying purely strategic laws, demanded the right of marching through Belgium in order to strike at France in their fight for national existence.

Belgium asserted her neutrality and armed. Actually she was pledged to neutrality by treaty and no one had accused her of neglect of her obligations, although she had entered the realm of European policy. Eighty years earlier she had been given independence and since then had acquired an economic position world-wide in its relations. When she received from the hands of Leopold the Congo State with an area of 2,252,780 square kilometres and 19,000,000 inhabitants her policy became imperialist. She gave up the dumb rôle assigned to her and took up a speaking part on the stage of world politics—a rôle in contradiction to her neutral position which implied a renunciation of any attempt to increase her strength and resources and had to be guarded the more jealously as the balance of power was endangered. From now on Belgian interests were closely bound up with those of Britain and France if Belgium did not wish to expose herself to an intolerable flank pressure in Africa. She was in no position to maintain herself in independence of the Powers except by pledging herself to one of the two opposing coalitions. Preference and suitable enticements, the knowledge that the

alliance of Britain with France and Russia tipped the scales in France's favour as well as the strategic consideration that, involved in a war on two fronts, Germany would seek a way through Flanders, made her turn to the Western Powers. The Belgian area was no longer a strategic unity cut off on all sides, but for every possible event became a flank position. Her fortifications were directed to meet a menace from the east, conversations were held with the French and British Staffs and the Belgian army was organised as the advanced left wing of the Anglo-French battle line. Strategically from being a buffer state she had become an outlying one in relation to Central Europe.

The conversations resulted neither in formal treaties nor military conventions. Neutrality, indeed, was taken as assured as Britain and France stood out in their own interests as its protectors and it was purely a case of arranging measures in the event of Germany seeking to attack France through Belgium. The arrangement virtually imposed a unilateral obligation on Belgium and demanded of the Belgian army a strategic offensive in the triangle Liège–Antwerp–Namur, an advance southward and a flank movement which could only be undertaken in co-operation with the main Anglo-French army. The plans of the Belgian staff give the measure of Belgian policy. The German offensive tore the veil from a theatre of war prepared in advance for attack and defence.

The allied Western Powers intended to fight on the line Maastricht–Liège–Luxemburg but the German offensive anticipated them. When the Germans stormed Liège and so destroyed the Belgian offensive plan before the French and British were in position, the task of the Belgians was confined to holding the line of the Gette and the fortresses of Antwerp and Namur. They saw themselves left isolated, since the Allies, hard pressed between Maubeuge and Verdun, had arranged for a decisive counter-attack on both banks of the Meuse and on the Lorraine plain. Again the Germans anticipated them by placing their attacking army so far to the north and so strengthening it that the French and British were threatened with envelopment. That envelopment would have happened if the German right wing had retained its strength and had not been weakened by the detachment of three corps

to the eastern theatre and by the over-strengthening of the front in Lorraine.

When the Gette line was lost and Namur fell, the Belgian forces retired to Antwerp. They could no longer think of participating from the north in a decisive battle, but they held out under the walls of Antwerp threatening the flank and rear of the Germans hurrying through Charleroi and Neufchâteau and awaited rescue. When the Germans failed to obtain a decision on the Marne, and the Anglo-French *entente* became an indissoluble military alliance, Belgium ceased to play a secondary rôle, but became the political equal of the Western Powers. Antwerp fell, but the army escaped to the Yser, and until the end of the war fought bravely between Ypres and Nieuport.

In the World War Belgium fought for her own position and freed herself from all the international obligations which still were part of her neutrality. When she signed the Versailles treaty she did so as a state with a real independence which had been baptised in blood. The "diplomatic creation" had become a European Power. The transformation was inevitable, but Belgium by the acquisition of Eupen and Malmédy from Germany saw herself compelled to enter the sphere of influence of France, who will tolerate no really independent Power on her northern flank and was now strong enough to compel Belgium to acquiesce.

By the occupation of Alsace and Lorraine and her advance to the Rhine France was so strong that Belgium had not even a choice between her two allies. Britain lay across the Channel in a defensive position; France from the Yser to the Saar lay aggressively up against Belgium's unfortified flank. The line Dunkirk–Givet–Trier held by the French completely commanded Belgium, which became the northern glacis of France. On September 10, 1920, Belgium admitted the new conditions by signing a military agreement with France which placed the Belgian army under French control and united the French and Belgian zone of operations. The Belgian army, which had originally been assigned the triangle Louvain–Malines–Brussels, was assigned in the convention the gap of Liège as its offensive base, and so was faced with the necessity, should it be compelled to retreat, of falling back viâ Givet and

Maubeuge on Paris. Adjoining the Dutch frontier an important fortified zone was created.

This military agreement is certainly concerned with defence, but it indicates clearly that Belgium has surrendered her freedom of action. She has given up in favour of her ally the most important task of national defence, defence of one's own soil and the most important strategic necessity, the free choice of lines of retreat and defence. Antwerp, Brussels, East and West Flanders in this scheme are abandoned. In case of necessity the Belgian army would fall back southwards on the French main forces. Consequently the Belgians have given up the idea of refortifying Antwerp, and the historic refuge of freedom in the Netherlands becomes an undefended city. The lessons of the Great War have been taken to heart in this agreement, but it is founded on hypotheses which belong to the past.

When the Germans outmarched the Belgian field army and the Belgians retired to Antwerp in order to await the arrival of their tardy allies, Germany was at the height of her military power, and had defeated two Russian armies and the united armies of Britain and France. To-day the French are on the Rhine and Germany lies disarmed and mutilated, surrounded by states armed by and subservient to France. Even if Germany rose and could draw out from the earth or down from heaven men and munitions, Belgium would still be safe from an encounter with a serious enemy. As long as the French stand ready on the Rhine and the Main gap is threatened, Germany cannot dream of a turning movement in the north. The French centre of gravity is so firmly fixed between Mainz and Metz, that even by an attack in force from the north it could not be moved. When France eventually, as she must, retires from Koblenz and Mainz to the Saar, even then, if it came to war with Germany, the French line would run not by Belgium but by the historic battle sites on the Taunus, at the Neckar gap and on the Hardt, that is, if the French did not advance from their old camps on the Lorraine uplands, sweep over the glacis and appear in the Main valley before the Germans had crossed the demilitarised zone.

In case of need, the Belgian army is obliged to fall back on Paris, but its task is both offensive and defensive. If it is in

position on the Meuse at Liège, before the Ardennes passes and in the Maastricht recess, it covers Belgium and is also ready based on Malmédy and Verviers to assume the offensive since it commands the lines Aachen–Cologne and Aachen–Düsseldorf and the Roer, the Erft and the Lower Rhine. The evacuation of the Cologne zone will not make the position any better for Germany. Unprotected and enslaved the Germans must obey the strategic law dictated by the presence of the Belgian army. If that army, however, moves northward, then Holland from Maastricht to Bergen-op-Zoom is open to it.

That line of march is not unmentioned in history. Where to-day the Belgian army stands as the north group of the Franco-Belgian forces, there stood in 1672 the army of Louis XIV under Turenne ready to move forward and, based on Cologne, to break through between Visé and Maastricht, appear unexpectedly before Wesel and Emmerich and threaten Amsterdam on the flank. The Belgians have the same advantage as Turenne and can move at will either eastwards or northwards.

The Franco-Belgian alliance, considered from the French viewpoint, has reference likewise to the attitude taken up by Britain to Holland and the Rhine problem, and from the general viewpoint will be conditioned by the general relations of Britain and France. The Belgians stand on their own soil but also on the north glacis of France; their line of retreat no longer runs in an east-west direction, no longer approaches the Flemish coast, but avoids the maritime zone commanded by Holland and England and connects in a south-west direction the Belgian forward position with the continental base of operations of France. Belgium, despite the necessity for her to maintain close and friendly relations with Britain, has entered into an alliance which estranges her from that country and in the event of an Anglo-French quarrel leaves her no choice between the two Powers.

Consequently, Belgium's chief interest is to maintain the Anglo-French *entente*, and it was her own cause she fought for when, after the war, she sought to be the mediator between these two Powers. The Belgian Ministers worked in vain to justify the conclusion of the military agreement and declared that its end was to secure peace and that Belgium had to rely

both on France and Britain. They said that western Europe had to be defended on the Meuse and the Rhine and that Belgium, France and Britain should sign a defensive alliance for this purpose. Belgium had to be pro-French and pro-British at the same time. The phrase reveals the difficulty which faced them. The difficulty extends to Belgium's African empire. The Congo, which received an increase of territory at the settlement, appears in a new position. Africa, after the division of the German possessions, is an Anglo-French area in which the Spanish, Italian and Portuguese colonies are completely overshadowed. The Congo has become a central buffer state and as such is a pledge in the hands of its neighbours.

The future of Belgium depends on the relations between France and Britain. The new Power is burdened by its double position as a continental and a maritime state. It seeks security for it, too, is involved in the Rhine problem. Eupen and Malmédy were dearly bought. If Belgium, whose peace was wrecked by the strategy of the German offensive, had striven not only for the ending of her empty neutrality but also for her emancipation from any foreign influence she would not have become a military satellite of France and could have acted as mediator between that Power and Britain. The Versailles settlement prevented that and the Rhine pact has not freed Belgium but riveted her chains a little closer. Unwillingly, Belgium followed France into the Ruhr and followed the contest of Britain and France over the exploitation of the Versailles treaty with fear and hope. She saw herself exposed to greater dangers than ever and groaning under the burden of armaments. When France in 1925 began the retreat to the treaty, Belgium sought to win again a freer position as between Britain and France and hastened to place her signature to the general convention on the pacification of the Rhineland. But on that all is uncertain.

CHAPTER IV

THE NETHERLANDS AND SWITZERLAND IN THE NEW EUROPE

The Belgian minister who declared that western Europe must be defended on the Rhine and the Meuse moved the frontiers of western Europe eastwards by a political speech. The west European continental area and the Franco-Belgian area do not coincide. When western Europe is defended by Belgians and French on the Rhine and the Meuse, the defenders fight on German territory and in a Central European area on conquered soil. The Rhine from source to mouth flows through German territory and Germans inhabit both banks. The Meuse, the old frontier river of the Carolingians, flows divided between German and Latin. The upper Meuse lies to-day in the French area behind Rocroi where Condé first beat the Spanish, and where France strikes at Givet into the Belgian flank. On the Middle Meuse live the Walloons, the Latin section of Belgium. The Lower Meuse flows through Holland's fenland to the sea, surrounded by German peoples and mingled with the waters of the Rhine.

The old Netherlands, now divided into Dutch, Belgian and French territory, belong to the north-west area of Central Europe. The land from the Ems watershed to the hills of Artois between the sea and the mountains is a geographical unit. No natural southern barrier was given it. Stretching from north-east to south-west it lies open to migrations and campaigns. France took the south-west, Belgium the centre, Holland, turned towards the sea, shut itself up in the amphibian lowlands of the north.

The entrance of the Belgian kingdom into the French hegemonial system has re-arranged the whole area from a strategic point of view. It lies, no longer divided into three but into two, on the north-west flank of the Continent. The Belgian–French lowlands only in a very narrow sense have the significance of a flank area. The Liège region, which with that of Bâle supports laterally the French offensive position on the

Rhine, is also defended against Holland by a ring of forts facing east. Not Belgium but Holland is now the classic flank area of north-western Europe.

The artificial neutrality which formerly the Powers conferred on the diplomatic creation, Belgium, as if that would prevent it being a military highway, has yielded to the natural neutrality which the historical creation, Holland, after her withdrawal from world politics, made the basis of her state. The external parallelism between Belgian and Swiss neutrality has left the field free to the true parallelism between Dutch and Swiss neutrality. The countries at the source and at the mouth of the Rhine obey the same strategic laws. They both face to-day altered conditions; they both fight to preserve their neutrality and maintain their independence. As once they broke away from the empire to attain statehood of their own, so to-day with their ambitions realised they seek to determine their policy in a European sense.

When the war passed across Belgium, Holland's frontiers were undisturbed. Neither Limburg nor the islands at the mouth of the Scheldt were violated. The Germans avoided the strip of territory on the Meuse, although it struck deep into their flank; the British did not land in Walcheren or sail up the Scheldt, although Antwerp called and the occupation of the Scheldt islands would have been a serious threat to the enemy. Britain contented herself with the blockade and the control of the Dutch seas; Germany sought to protect herself from surprise from the sea by the establishment of fortified frontier camps. The maritime outlying situation of the Dutch flank area frightened both Powers, since it allowed Holland to take sides as she wished. The maintenance of Dutch neutrality offered greater advantages to the Powers at war than bringing Holland into the conflict which could not endure any further extension. Confined to its own territory, overrun with Belgian exiles, injured by the British blockade, but ready in the last event to fight for its own hand amid its dykes and dunes, Holland waited for the end of the war. Far away in the east lay the corner stone of its prosperity, the East Indies, threatened with danger, exposed to attack from Britain and Japan.

When the wave of war rolled back and the German armies

of the west, overcome by superior numbers, withdrew in fierce fighting from the Lys and the Scheldt to the Meuse, Holland was again in danger of being overwhelmed. On November 5, 1918, the Germans, who had left the enemy no room for encirclement, and kept closing their depleted ranks, fell back before the Allies and in the tragic retreat to the Rhine reached the line of the Meuse–Antwerp–Namur–Fumay and the Metz plateau. The enemy had in vain tried to bottle up the Flanders army in the Scheldt area or force it against the Dutch frontier. Wilhelm II sought asylum in Holland. Holland received the fugitive, extended its protection to the Crown Prince and maintained its sovereign rights against the claims and menaces of the victors who in vain demanded the surrender of the Hohenzollerns. When peace was signed Holland remained aloof, but entered the League of Nations without assuming any of the responsibility for the peace terms and, like Switzerland, sought to reconcile two contrary principles.

Holland stood before a new situation. She found on her frontiers a strengthened Belgium freed from neutrality and now a missionary of French hegemony; she saw Germany condemned to impotence and the Rhine and the Meuse, the vital continental arteries of her land, under French domination. Although the sea consitutes the basis of Dutch life, Holland cannot do without either the connecting river line or security for free transit on the railways, since her trade is both maritime and continental. Belgium's rise to independent power and her alliance with France have disturbed Holland's peace.

After the war at the time of the advance of Belgian forces into the Meuse zone she saw herself faced with the necessity to put Limburg into a state of defence. Not only the eastern flank but also the western flank was threatened since Belgium sustained by France forcibly demanded free passage in the Scheldt estuary, transformed Zeebrugge into a powerful war port and contested Holland's rights to the coastal waters of Wieringen. Behind that was concealed the creation of the Belgo-French north front which, in 1920, turned threateningly against Britain.

The future of Holland is more intimately than ever connected with the development of Anglo-French relations. That has been the case since the Peace of Utrecht. The age of

Napoleon has, it is true, seen greater distress, for Holland was incorporated in the French Empire as "the alluvium of French rivers," but Holland's fate then lay in the hands of a single individual. She was not confined in a political system which developed in space and time. To-day conditions are different. Britain's world commitments have so increased since the days of Trafalgar and Waterloo and her insular position has been so weakened that she can no longer afford strong support to Holland. Yet Britain will never permit Holland to run into serious danger. After the loss of the Belgian glacis the Dutch coasts form the last continental stretch which could serve the British as a naval base. More than once have the British landed on the Dutch coast to drive back the French. But they always fought allied to the German Powers. Austrians and Prussians bore the brunt of the conflict; to-day, the full weight lies on Britain's shoulders. When Britain consented to the disarmament of Germany, she robbed Holland of her continental flank protection and deprived herself of her traditional ally in the conflict for the maintenance of the balance of power, now so blindly destroyed.

Holland has been driven from her peaceful situation less through the war than through Britain's abandonment of the old basis of her policy, the balance of power. Whenever Britain consented to open to France the way to the Rhine in order to destroy completely Germany's power, Holland saw herself delivered over to Belgo-French domination. But Britain cannot leave Holland in the lurch. The Franco-Belgian alliance demands as sequel an Anglo-Dutch alliance.

Dutch neutrality becomes a universal obligation only when the balance of power is again maintained in Europe. It shares this fate with the Swiss neutrality which, while it remains on its old historical basis, has suffered modifications which have arisen from the destruction of the balance of power and which have been increased by the establishment of a League of Nations corresponding to the strategic grouping of the World War.

A glance at conditions in Europe is sufficient to establish the community of interests which makes it necessary for the two historical sea-powers to maintain the old friendship. If that glance passes from Europe to the Pacific where Holland's

flourishing East Indian colonies lie in the midst of the dangerous Anglo-Japanese zone, the last doubt as to the correctness of this policy vanishes.

Dutch policy remains determined by the development which William of Orange prescribed for it before he ascended the British throne. The grouping of 1689 stands before us. We see Louis XIV take the field against Holland and the Palatinate, and Britain, Holland and the Empire stand together against imperialist France while the Turks summoned by Louis attack the Danube front. That was a year of crisis for Europe. Germanism fought, pressed by the Turks in the east and the French in the west, on the Rhine and the Danube in a European war for existence. It fought with Britain as ally because William III, converted suddenly to an insular viewpoint, fought France no longer as the foe of his old realm but as the supreme Power in Europe and was resolved to guard British interests by the re-establishment of equilibrium between the European Powers. It was a great political turning-point, the beginning of a war of peoples on the basis of which was prepared unnoticed the supremacy of Britain.

William fought until France was willing to make peace. He did not fight long enough to drive her from the Rhine, but only until her offensive power was broken, her fleet destroyed and Britain was secured against a return of the Stuarts. The Netherlands followed in Britain's wake in order to obtain a favourable commercial treaty and received the right to hold seven Belgian fortresses as a barrier against France. To-day Holland is flung back on Zeeland, surrounded by Belgian fortresses and held fast in the grip of the Franco-Belgian military agreement.

In this confined position the Netherlands, mindful of the national honour, preserve the tradition of centuries. They apply themselves to the perfection of the League of Nations, simultaneously strengthen their military forces and are resolved " to pursue the task of restoring the balance of power destroyed by the war." In these words—spoken by Queen Wilhelmina in the speech from the Throne on September 21, 1920—the problem is clearly stated, the solution of which will guarantee Dutch security. That implies the return of Germany to the circle of sovereign Great Powers and the renunciation by

France of the use of her dominant position on the German Rhine and the Belgian Meuse. Whether the Rhine-Pact will give increased security time will show.

When the balance of power broke down as a result of the war and the League idea was made to subserve an imperialist peace, the German area in which Bismark created the German Empire and in so doing perfected the European equilibrium was riven asunder. Germany as a Great Power was ruined and the western coastal Powers which had once broken away from the Holy Roman Empire saw themselves in a new world. The small states saw destroyed the security which the system of equilibrium had given them without receiving security in the League of Nations. Hence their endeavour to bring the League out of the Versailles atmosphere into the clear air of Europe and to save it from becoming merely the executive organ of the Versailles treaty.

Belgium was not able to adopt this standpoint because she had chained herself to the imperialist Powers. Luxemburg felt herself included in the Franco-Belgian system. The Netherlands laid emphasis on their neutrality, and taking counsel of their history, gave expression to the idea of restoring the balance of power, but Switzerland, which is not close to Britain and is encircled by France and Italy, saw its strategic position no longer in accord with perpetual neutrality and sought to secure its future by the awakening and development of the ideals conceded in the conception of a League of Nations.

The policy of Switzerland was determined to a greater extent than that of other nations by its entry into the League. The facts that Switzerland is absolutely surrounded by land in her strategic flank position in the Alps, that this originally German national state has become a Germano-Latin Confederation, and that Swiss commerce is dependent on the world markets, fill the little state with disagreements which threaten its cohesion if foreign pressure were to force or disturb its frontiers. Yet Switzerland has great reserves of strength, which are based upon the deep-rootedness of the federal idea in the natural limits of the Swiss area. Switzerland still to-day has *noli tangere* for motto. But even Switzerland must be ready to make its motto good.

When it resolved on the field of Marignano, after its great rise to power from the Burgundian war and the campaigns in Italy, to retire from world history, it made an irrevocable renunciation. The little nation, which stood by favour of the Emperor as guardian of the Alpine passes until the crown went to Austria and her quarrel with the Swiss estranged it from the Emperor, withdrew within its narrow natural limits.

For one moment it took the lead in European history. When it halted the Valois at St. Jacob on the Birs, it saved the Upper Rhine from the first attack by monarchical France. When at Granson and Murten it humbled the pride of Burgundy it fought on the Swiss uplands which lead to the Rhine with its front to the west and stayed the Burgundian advance half-way to its goal. When it freed itself from the Habsburgs and the Empire it fought on two fronts and using interior lines drove the enemy on the right over the Rhine, in the centre to the Hegau and on the left from the Jura to the Black Forest. When it crossed the St. Gotthard, it secured the southern glacis of its Alpine fortress and after the loss of the Lombard conquests made certain that this key region should not fall into hostile hands. When the Valois turned against Savoy, Bern secured the Waadt and Geneva gave up to the Confederation the protection of the Rhône gates, the Confederation's territory was rounded off. Later Bern won Héricourt and the men of Strasbourg and Rottweil fought in the Swiss ranks at Murten against Charles the Bold, but there was no longer any question of expansion. A deadly feud separated the Germanic populations on either side of the Rhine and the Lake of Constance, and Franche Comté, the north-western Jura glacis, occupied after the fall of Charles, was sold to Louis XI and Maximilian.

The strategic position of Switzerland is thus that of a centrally placed natural fortress which forms in all directions a flank position giving the defenders room for sallies on a grand scale and dangerously crowding the assailants. Only when Switzerland becomes merely a sector of a wide war front does this law suffer modification. The most notable example was when Napoleon ascended the Rhône valley, crossed the St. Bernard, captured Milan, and marching on the Po, won the battle of Marengo.

More important still is the fact that the campaign gave to

the French the left bank of the Rhine and the source and mouth of that river. Napoleon thenceforth warred in the heart of Europe. The Rhine was won, the Main gates forced, Germany stood open to attack and Austria was overthrown on the Inn, Prussia on the Saale. Switzerland became merely a French area for the purposes of revenue and conscription, but, when Napoleon's career was over, it resumed its old strategic position. In November 1813, after Leipzig, the allies marched on the Rhine. While their northern army fought in Holland and Blücher's Army of Silesia concentrated in the centre to pass the Rhine between Lahnstein and Mannheim, the main army on the left advanced between Murg and Aach and crossed the Rhine at Bâle. Switzerland became a military highway. Schwarzenberg moved up to the Aar, crossed the Jura, passed through Franche Comté in constant anxiety for the security of his left flank and ascended the Langres plateau. If Napoleon had had 50,000 men available to occupy the Rhône valley the Austrian would not have crossed the Saône. When some weeks later Augereau hurried 30,000 militia to Lyons, Schwarzenberg no longer felt safe at Langres, although Blücher had already taken the bull by the horns and Napoleon had won victory upon victory on the Marne in the vain effort to break the coils closing upon him. The advance through Switzerland had been not only the roundabout way but the wrong way. It is the last great military operation on Swiss soil.

When the World War broke out, Switzerland mobilised to protect her frontiers and her neutrality, now recognised by treaty. Both sides avoided this dangerous area where a tiny army stood ready for action, able to march at need eastwards or westwards, and strongly entrenched to guard the southern glacis of the St. Gotthard. They realised that the use of the Swiss flank area was less advantageous than its avoidance since, as long as it remained outside the war, it protected the flank of both sides and served both sides without demanding the detachment of military forces. Like an impassable ocean, Switzerland lay between the combatants.

Nevertheless, the tortured imagination of the belligerents and that of the Swiss themselves led to panics. The basis of the imagined peril was two plans of campaign of the French

Staff, proposals, which have remained unauthenticated, of the German Staff, and the counter measures taken by the Swiss authorities. When at the beginning of 1916 the Germans planned to break the Anglo–Belgo–French front which was firmly established from the Yser to the Larg and seemed to threaten simultaneously Belfort and Verdun, the French General Staff concentrated forces in the Besançon area to meet an attack in the Jura zone. When in January 1917 the rumour spread that the Germans intended to cross Swiss territory and turn Belfort, the same thing happened. The French reconnoitred the Jura passes, concentrated independent forces, laid out batteries and prepared to advance at three days' notice between Lausanne and Bern. In the early spring of 1918 the same rumour spread and caused the same blind terror.

The German High Command knew that it had neither the strength nor the time to embark on a campaign in which it was necessary to overcome the Jura barrier, traverse the Swiss highlands, drive the Swiss covering troops from their position, and defeat the main Swiss army as it came from the east, receiving French reinforcements on the way, before the march took on the appearance of an operation. Even if all had gone well the turning movement would have ended in front of new trenches. The same difficulties confronted the French. They also had neither the strength not the time for such a move, although the German flank was more vulnerable than their own because the flank area of the Upper Rhine at Bâle is open to a northward attack while the French flank, divided naturally into sectors between Belfort, Besançon and Langres, lay trebly secured behind the Vosges, the Jura and the Morvan. Thus Switzerland escaped the World War.

Not the war but the peace was dangerous to it. Its strategic position was not fundamentally changed at Versailles, but was submitted to new and harsher laws. When in 1815 Switzerland pleaded for perpetual neutrality, she did so because of the bloody lessons of the chapter of military history which had just ended. In the course of the XIXth century the thesis which dissuaded the Powers from invading Swiss territory was notably modified. The political sense of the Swiss rebelled against a strategic argument which may have been a danger signal to the Powers but never took into con-

sideration the basis of the state's existence, a basis which found expression in the recognition of its perpetual neutrality.

Switzerland, as it were, declared itself to be the guardian of the flank position established by nature in its territory, and claimed the rôle of its protector as a natural right assigned to it by the interests of Europe and confirmed in writing by the Powers. It was more willing to take the risk of declaring its land to be the citadel of Europe which must not be in the possession of any imperialist state than to follow the example of the negotiators who in 1815 secured the recognition of its neutrality and treated it as an area which must be avoided by the belligerents in their own interests. It desired its territory to be avoided not merely because it was strategically dangerous, but also as a Swiss possession known to be guarded against invasion. It desired not only to protect its neutrality for its own sake, but at the same time to be neutral for the sake of the system of European equilibrium. This was a political apotheosis of the historic renunciation of an active position and of the possibility of being involved in imperialist competition. Switzerland handled the question sensibly when in the XIXth century it transformed itself from a federation of states to a federal state and armed itself to defend its independence in the shape of guaranteed neutrality. It repudiated any foreign influence, kept aloof from alliances and agreements and trusted in the maintenance of the balance of power which, by the creation of united Italy and the German Empire, had created new problems on its frontiers. When the World War upset the old order of things and the Versailles treaty substituted for the balance of power the hegemony of France, Switzerland's position of peace between the Great Powers was lost. It took refuge in the League of Nations.

The entry of Switzerland into the League, regarded strategically, is an attempt to meet the dangers caused by the alteration of its situation by obtaining a new political basis. The step was taken with a sad heart, since Switzerland offered essential elements of its perpetual neutrality on the altar of an unknown god. It succeeded, however, in securing special treatment when it was released from the obligation under Article 16 of military support by reference to that neutrality, but it did not obtain release from the obligation to break off relations with

a land threatened with League action and saw itself caught in a mesh of ambiguous treaties and made a partner in negotiations to the abandonment of the dumb rôle which it had played for centuries.

The existence of Switzerland as a sovereign state is tied to the maintenance of its abstention from international politics and the inviolability of its territory. Its perpetual neutrality is fundamentally nothing else but the political statement of a geographical situation in which Germanic and Latin inhabitants have agreed to create a community in the midst of the great nations. To no state has history presented a more tragic conflict than to Switzerland, which belongs to three cultural areas and yet can exist as a state only in geographical isolation. It appears more threatened than other nations by the great principles of nationality and self-determination. It is to-day a free political community but it cannot allow its frontiers to be changed or itself think of expansion since any dislocation strikes at the root of its existence. It therefore may well be that for its own security it must acknowledge Article 10 of the League Covenant which obliges member-states to respect the territorial integrity of their fellow members and defend them from attack, but it thereby falls in all the greater opposition to Article 16 which obliges member-states to participate in military operations. The League would doubtless not have admitted this opposition had not Swiss neutrality been presumed in the Versailles treaty. The League Council laid it down that the idea of neutrality was not compatible with the fundamental idea that member-states were to act as one, but it was not able to enforce that idea in the case of Switzerland, since Article 435 of the treaty expressly recognised Switzerland's perpetual neutrality.

Switzerland bought its freedom from the military obligations placed on member-states by Article 16, by renouncing historic rights on the Savoy frontiers which the treaty declared to be anachronistic. It saw itself involved in a treaty which it had not signed and its frontiers determined by a war in which it had not taken part. It saw itself compelled to consent to an upsetting of the arrangement made in 1815 for the neutralisation of the Savoy zone and learned that the arrangements, once made for the protection of Geneva in the free

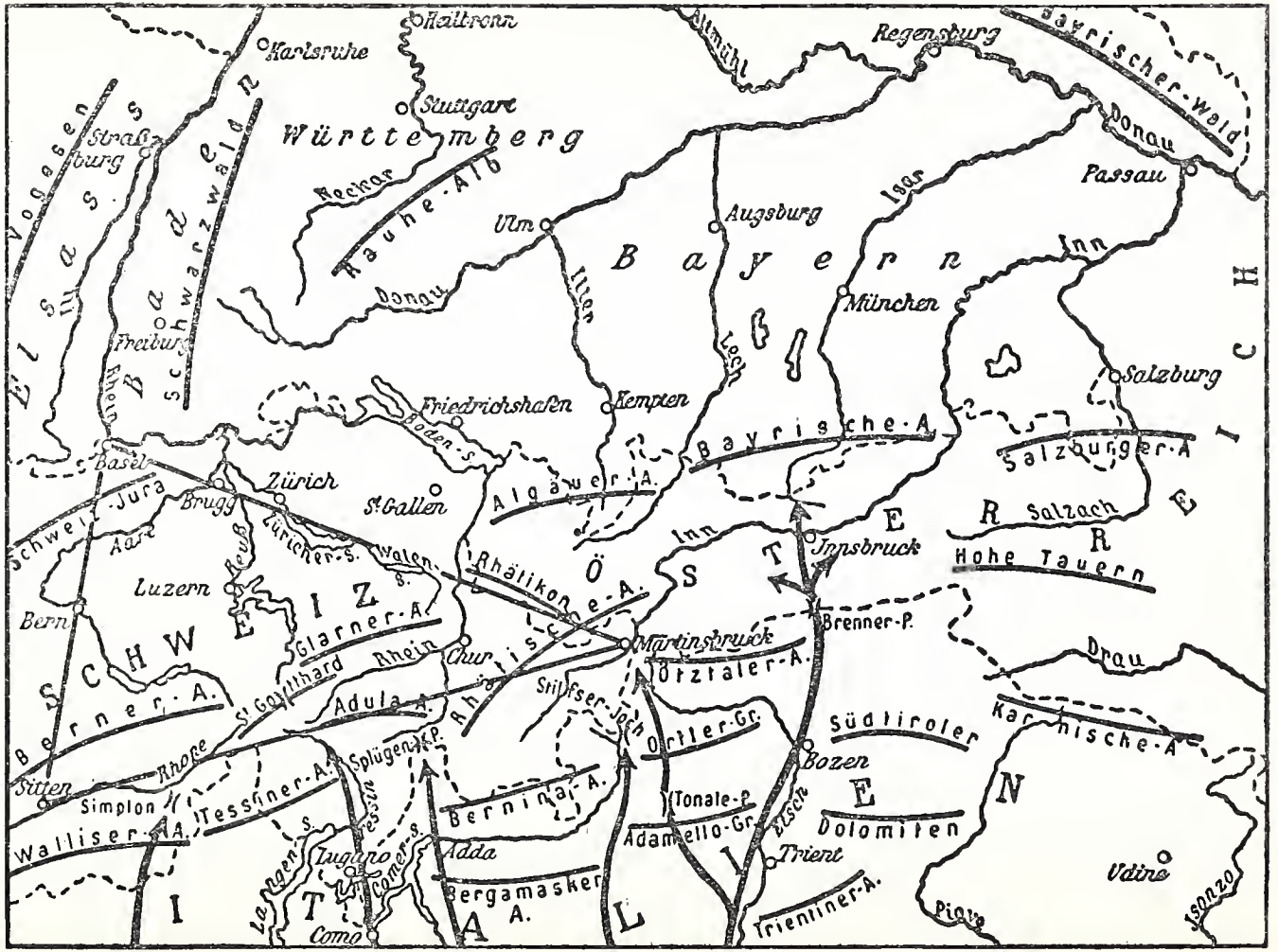
zones of Upper Savoy and the county of Gex, were not applicable to the situation existing in 1918 and that it was the duty of France and itself to regulate the juridical situation of these territories by an understanding between them in order to create conditions suited to the times.

Switzerland, from the historical point of view, saw in this article the salvation of its political position, which was based on the recognition of perpetual neutrality, through the sacrifice of strategic and tariff privileges at the demand of France. It was clear that this was in Europe's interests, but there was no doubt left that its neutrality had been weakened by the foundation of the League of Nations, since the League by its very nature knows no neutrality, and that France as the victorious Power would regulate the frontier question to her own advantage.

France freed herself from the control which had been placed in 1815 on the then Savoyard, but later French, territory of Savoy and Gex. The question has not yet been settled and Switzerland still hopes to save the Geneva territory, already surrounded by French customs posts, from an oppressive burden in the arbitration it has demanded, but the real issue is not an economic one but the claim of France to escape from obligations imposed on her when vanquished. It is also a strategic one. France is able to-day to march on Savoy and the Lake of Geneva. The memory of Marengo arises. . . .

Switzerland must exhaust all the resources of law in defence of its standpoint since the strategic insecurity which will be created on its western flank influences the general strategic situation and throws a shadow on the apparent advantage which Switzerland gained when it resisted application to itself of Article 16. The League Council freed it from the military obligations imposed on member-states, but Switzerland admitted expressly the obligation to participate in the commercial and financial measures ordered by the League against a Covenant-breaking state and to defend by its own strength its own territory under all circumstances, even during a war undertaken by the League. Therein its position is made more difficult but the right of self-defence is recognised.

If we examine the general strategic situation of Switerland, we must base our examination on the conditions created by



THE LINES OF ITALIAN ATTACK NORTHWARD AND THE SWISS DEFENSIVE TRIANGLE.

the Versailles settlement and the foundation of the League of Nations. The Powers which won the war surround Switzerland on two-thirds of its frontier (800 out of 1,200 kilometres). As France and Italy are fully conscious of their power and Austria and Germany are condemned to impotence, Switzerland, not merely as part of Europe, but on its own frontiers is no longer in a position of peace. While Holland is placed on the coast, which can suffer no attack unless Britain permits, Switzerland lies prisoned within land frontiers.

When Germany and Austria were still powerful and Germany's west frontiers were not on the exposed Rhine but on the hills above Belfort, when Austria had not been thrown beyond the Brenner but was established above Verona and on the Stelvio, Switzerland was no less surrounded, but the pressure of its neighbours fell equally, kept it, as it were, in an upright position and permitted it to defend its natural flank position politically and strategically on every side. Nothing remains save to consider its frontiers guaranteed by the League of Nations. Whether that is enough to preserve them inviolate time will show. The Elsgau at the north-western end of the Jura and Ticino, threatened by pan-Italian propaganda, are already in the shadow of danger and even the south-eastern frontiers from which the Inn issues are exposed to Italian aggressors.

The influence which the Franco-Italian sphere of domination exercises on the area occupied by the Swiss is determined by a line drawn from Bâle to Martinsbruck and from the point where the Rhine turns north to the emergence of the Inn from the Lower Engadine. It passes by Brugg, Zürich, Weesen and Sargans, and within the great bend of the Rhine follows the first strategic section of the Rhine area which commands South Germany from the south-western flank. The valley of Lake Constance and the Hegau gap are commanded by a diagonal line drawn from the Rhine at Sargans to the mouth of the Aar. History in 1789 marked it with blood on the map when the French stood to fight at Zürich and beat off the Austro-Russian attack. To-day there is no French army on the Zürich heights which can serve as pivot to the wing armies as they advance into South Germany and into Lombardy, but French power from the Upper Rhine

casts its rays on Masséna's abandoned positions. The line Bâle–Martinsbruck which connects the extreme defensive positions of the Swiss to the Franco-Italian encirclement determines to-day the strategic position of Switzerland. It divides the Swiss zone of operations into a narrow eastern glacis and a wide zone of movement which stretches from the Limat–Aar line to the Rhône gates.

If Germany ever thought of appealing to arms to free herself from the chains of the Versailles servitude, and the German command risked parting with strong forces in order to win a fleeting success in an eccentric direction, an attack intended to win the Swiss flank area from Hegau and Bregenz in order to turn the French Rhine front on the south would fall upon the enemy on the ideal line, Bâle–Sargans. If the French in a war with Germany sought to secure in advance the Swiss flank area, although to-day they stand in a secure position between Metz and Mainz in the classic offensive zone of the French armies directly in front of the wide open gates of Germany, they, too, would seek to gain the line Bâle–Sargans in order to take the defenders of the Black Forest on the flank or to dig themselves in in Masséna's position between the Aar and the Glatt and on the Zürich heights. We do not, of course, hold it likely that anything of the kind will happen, for the warning given by Pictet de Rougemont, the negotiator of the perpetual neutrality in 1815, that Switzerland is a thankless land to war in, has lost nothing of its force and in a war in the future the commanders will be more inclined to concentrated action in spite of the vast numbers of men mobilised than in the World War which lost itself in space and time, but the course of the war depends on the fundamental strategic conditions imposed on the Rhine valley since the end of the war.

Not Switzerland's eastern frontiers but its southern ones are directly strategically endangered. The Italians have won a flank position at Vintsch from which they can break into the Lower Engadine in order to turn the mountain bastion of Ticino. Switzerland has therefore to protect a danger zone in the south and south-east, a task from which it has long been free. Here its position as an Alpine state and as a free community of peoples will be defended.

The strategic defensive area of Switzerland treated as a whole is to-day defined by the lines which meet to form the triangle Bâle–Sitten–Martinsbruck, the Bâle district being considered a glacis commanded from the Jura. Clausewitz, discussing a plan of operations against France, said : " Nothing would be more foolish than to grant Switzerland an overwhelming geographical influence on the war because it is the highest country in Europe." He passed judgment thereby of permanent strategic value and on the leadership which would use Swiss territory as a battle area or a military highway. The strategic position of Switzerland to-day is more endangered because the leaders of the future may need its territory so much as because we must reckon not only with wars in which the nations will fight one with the other in the Far East or in which great Powers and coalitions will make war upon each other in the heart of Europe, but with League of Nations wars in which no reservation will avail and every centrally-placed state will run the risk of being claimed and taken as a military highway. A war which is directed against the existence or the frontiers of Switzerland is conceivable only if the League of Nations proves unable to discharge its functions or is wrecked in a clash of elemental forces.

CHAPTER V

THE RÔLE OF AUSTRIA

When the Swiss made perpetual neutrality the fundamental law of their state, the southern frontier of the Confederation was the Austrian Empire. To-day Italy instead of Austria stands where Austria stood from the sources of the Dora Baltea to the sources of the Adige. The Austrian Empire has completed its course. The mere fragment of the shattered Danube monarchy which holds fast to Germanism and to the historic name of Austria shares only a narrow frontier with Switzerland from the Inn at Bund to the Rhine at St. Gall. Between them lies undisturbed the tiny land of Liechtenstein.

For a moment Austria's most westerly district, Vorarlberg, played with the idea of departing from the fragment of a state left standing after the Versailles partitions. It thought of appealing to the principle of self-determination and seeking admission to the Swiss Confederation, but although there were voices raised in Switzerland for an acceptance of the petition, the matter fell through, and fortunately, for Vorarlberg must share Austria's destiny and Switzerland must not change its frontiers as otherwise these, after such a precedent, might be modified by a demand from inside them.

The old Austria is destroyed but the political mission of Austrian Germanism is not completed. The new Austria is to-day still in the historical position which Charlemagne created at the eastern end of the Alps and in the Danube area of Vienna. To-day it is still the German march, perhaps even more so than in the days of the Carolingians when the flood of eastern peoples ebbed at its frontiers. It is no longer the kernel of the strong empire which Rudolf of Habsburg won on the Marchfeld but it represents the independent part of the old united Austro-Hungarian monarchy which once extended from the Adriatic to the Bug.

The history of the Dual Monarchy is that of a great attempt to attain true unity, to give it supremacy in the Danube valley, to extend its frontiers to the Sea of Marmara and to surround it

with strong outworks. That history is obscured by the dynastic interests of the Habsburgs which were in the west, while the future of Austria was clearly connected with the domination of the east. The Habsburgs neglected too long to build up the Danube monarchy into a modern state and despite their heroic struggle against France they subordinated the vital interests of the empire to their own ambition. They were the founders of old Austria but the proudest dynasty of Europe did not understand the task laid before it. It delayed the political consolidation of its Austrian heritage till it was too late to fuse the past and the future. Only with Maria Teresa were the lands on this side of the Leitha opened to the constitutional ideas which long ago on the other side had received concrete expression among the Magyars. It was too late to summon the polyglot population to create a unitary state; constitutional development remained confined to the German element and the Austrian Germany was deposed from its position of leadership after it had used up its best strength in the wars with revolutionary and Napoleonic France. The dynasty saw in the alliance with reaction, which found its strongest expression in Metternich's system, the guarantee of the safety of the Austrian state in the war of nationalities and went down because of that. The Slavs have separated from the fallen empire; Magyars and Germans are ruined.

The Powers who broke Austria-Hungary in pieces without creating a new common system for the Danube lands destroyed more than a great empire. Austria's aim was set for her by Eugène of Savoy, the soldier who fought victoriously at Turin and Belgrade, Höchstädt and Malplaquet, the statesman who broke French supremacy and bade the Turk halt in Moravia. He set Austria on the road to the fulfilment of her European mission. He made an eastward-directed Danube empire but he was not permitted to establish it constitutionally in the consciousness of Austria's peoples.

Austria, which to-day is compressed between Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Jugoslavia, Italy and Switzerland, was never so monstrously deformed. No period of history knows of an Austria so deprived of natural frontiers and the chances of survival as the fragment called Austria to-day. The Versailles Powers, with the Wilsonian banner with the

device " Self-determination " upon it, did not seek to make an Austria which could live, but only to extend the frontiers of Italy and the Succession states and so hem in Germanism. Strategic considerations led to a frontier settlement which guaranteed absolute superiority to her neighbours.

Thus Austria was not driven from above Verona, past Trent to the Tonale Pass and the Dolomites but to beyond the Brenner into North Tirol ; not from Trieste to the watershed between the Adriatic and the Save but across the Save and the Danube to Carinthia and was deprived of half of Styria, while in the north she was driven out of Bohemia into Lower Austria and back on the Marchfeld. Bozen, Meran, Buxen, Sterzing, Glurns and Bruneck, the Stelvio Pass and the Brenner were given to Italy ; Möttling, Laibach, Cilli and Marburg to Jugoslavia. To-day Vienna is only 40 kilometres from the Czech frontier in the extreme east of a state confined to Vorarlberg, North Tirol, Salzburg, Carinthia, North Styria, Upper and Lower Austria and the Burgenland. Austria still enjoys that part of the Danube which flows between Passau and Pressburg, but international servitude weighs on that stream and the Enns is to-day Austria's greatest river. Czechs, Serbs and Italians are in possession of the great bases and routes of invasion which command Austria in the north and south and an army of 20,000 men is called to defend an area which has an east-west frontier of 600 kilometres and at the Salzburg end is only 40 kilometres wide. At the Brenner, the Italians are within an easy four days' march of Munich.

Of the 10,000,000 Germans who lived in the old Austria only 6,420,000 live in the little republic and fight there for individual and national existence. They sought entry to the League of Nations in order not to remain in complete isolation and found there financial support, for it was the victors' duty to see that their state did not perish. Thus Austria, once so mighty, seems to live to-day only by grace of the victorious Powers to be a buffer state, to keep open a strategic highway in the new Central Europe and to enjoy a negative existence which has no future. The appearance is deceitful. The future of the Austrian Germans is by no means hopeless. The old marches once held the line Pressburg–Marburg–Görz until

Germanism had established itself between the Vosges and the Böhmerwald and had won for western civilisation the peoples on the eastern marches. Their descendant holds to-day the line which runs from the Brenner *via* the Ploken Pass and Klagenfurt to Radkersburg against Italians and Jugoslavs to serve as a buttress to its lost compatriots in South Tirol, South Styria and Carniola in their fight for German speech and German civilisation and to prevent this once glorious centre of Germanism disappearing altogether.

In spite of its reduction to a tiny state, Austria is not condemned to be a political pigmy. France, of course, sees in it only a corridor-state which adjoins the neutral Swiss state and continues the neutralised zone dominated by France to the Pressburg bend of the Danube and the Karawankens, but this corridor is by no means open to the French and is only a geographical expression so long as the League of Nations does not make French interests its own.

Austria is still a Central Power. The narrow western end in which Vorarlberg and North Tirol are confined will be the more strongly attracted to the north, the deeper the Italians press into it, the eastern end gravitates to the Danube and to-day still draws Bohemia to itself. The river area of the Danube is the one great inland feature of Europe, which running from west to east holds West and East together.

The Romans were the first who conceived the idea of fixed frontiers, but they settled them from the Mediterranean, the centre of their empire. They conquered the Rhine and the Danube for strategic reasons and based the power of Imperial Rome on the domination, conceived as a single system, of both rivers. They built the great fortified line of the *Limes* from the Lippe to the Upper Danube, and conquered the Danube to its emergence into the plains by means of a concentrically conceived attack from Switzerland and the Adige valley, and finally won with the Balkans as base Wallachia and Siebenbürgen. It took a hundred years from the time when Octavian defeated the Pannonians on the Save and the Culpa to conquer Pannonia and Dacia. Only when Trajan had annihilated Decebalus's Dacians in Transylvania did the river from its sources in the Black Forest to the marches of Galatz become the great frontier line of the empire. The great

migrations broke through it but Theodoric the Great retained for his East Gothic kingdom the title to abandoned Pannonia when he sat on Honorius's throne at Ravenna and held under his control Italy, Switzerland, Provence and Aquitaine.

The second great effort to control the Danube, the greatest of all, was that of the Habsburgs. It is the only one which developed from a point within the river area and continued into our own times. The third attempt had nothing to do with this geo-political conception but has to be treated as such because it embraced the area from the mouth of the Save to its source and held Bessarabia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary for two centuries under the rule of a conqueror—the Turk.

To-day we are witnessing the fourth attempt to make a unity of the river area after it has been shattered to pieces in the conflict of nationalities. Already this attempt is baptised with the name of Danubian federation although it is still wrapped in mystery and even its basic idea is still doubtful. It is not an Austrian idea but its champions gamble with Austria's future. The problem falls into two parts. France wishes the Danube states to form a chain whose component parts would be pledged to serve French imperialism, while in the Danubian states attention is concentrated on the idea of a league of all the river states in order to restore on new bases the old economic unity.

The French idea arises out of the conflict in which France is involved at once because of her fear for her security and her struggle for hegemony. It is linked to the Napoleonic tradition which considers the Danube as a French military way. The line Ulm–Regensburg–Linz–Vienna–Budapest–Orsova–Vidin–Bucharest–Galatz would be placed at the service of the states lying on it. Austria and Hungary with the Czechs and the Jugoslavs with Italy now connected with the Continent in Tirol, with Roumania become great by possessing Siebenbürgen and with Bulgaria confined to the Balkans, again be arrayed against Germany.

The conception shows clearly the egoism of French policy. The river states are to be made clients of France and the possibility of acting according to their own law of gravity is to be taken from them. If this idea were realised, the area between

the Inn and the mouth of the Danube would be reduced to a French military zone. Austria would pass from the German area and sink to be a French client state of the third rank. The plan is a furtive attempt to resume the policy of Rome which used all the Rhine and Danube lands to form a military zone against Germany. For quite a long time Paris thought it possible even to unite the lands from the Upper Danube to the mouth of the Inn to this end and make Suabia and Bavaria serve the ends of the planned Danube confederation, even to a certain extent to re-erect the *Limes*. This French confederation would have been purely artificial, doomed to remain separated from its protectors, even if the French had succeeded in remaining permanently on the Middle Rhine and coercing the client states into an unnatural alliance which would profit none of them and would destroy Austria.

Even an economic union of the Danubian states is problematical. One could certainly speak justly of the irony of history if the Danubian states turned earnestly to the task of gathering up the pieces broken at Versailles and seeking to make a whole out of them on a federal basis. The time was already ripe for that in 1850. But the hand of France appears even here. The policy of hegemony demands the maintenance and strengthening of the Slav succession states. It will support a confederation if this leads to a further concentration of the political and economic forces in the south-east of Central Europe and if France's influence over its individual members is not thereby diminished. To keep Germany impotent is the supreme law for France. France obeys that law only if a Danubian confederation takes its stand against Germany politically and economically. This is the root of the problem.

The press of states in south-eastern Europe no longer possesses a common centre of gravity. The economic unity of the Dual Monarchy has been deliberately destroyed. Austria has become poor in a fruitful land and deprived of her mineral resources is most heavily hit. Her situation reveals how incompetent politicians are to think economically. Even the envied Czechoslovakia, sated with agricultural and mineral wealth, is not self-sufficing. Both lands—the poor and the rich—are over industrialised. When Austria received a loan

from the League of Nations, she set to work to balance her budget. She succeeded, but the state of Austria was able neither to break the tariff barriers which completely surround her nor to balance her external receipts and payments, nor to renew the basis of her trade. The restoration of the currency did not guarantee the restoration of trade. The barriers which her neighbours have erected are politically conceived and the very bases of her economic existence have been destroyed. If the Danube confederation became a reality, Austria would be the only state which would have to sacrifice its nationality to it in order to dip into the mess of pottage, and to give up not merely the rights of the first-born but the possibility of independent existence. The debtor of Versailles would become the boarder of three succession states and all its claims to nationality would disappear. If, to avoid this fate, Austria fled to Italy's arms in order to enter into a close connection with the Mediterranean state which has advanced to the Brenner and to Istria and, inverting the historic relations, claims to dominate the south land, she would sooner or later be partitioned between Italy, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Is that Austria's future ?

By no means. History retains other memories. Austria and Germany must individually go back a little on the path of history till they reach the spot where once their ways parted. German Austria must now fulfil the noble task of which Uhland spoke at Frankfort when he said that it was her duty to be " an artery at the heart of Germany." The emancipation of the Slav states has supplied the circumstances which make such a return necessary. Certainly it is no longer the old Habsburg empire which turns north and west when the hour summons, but it is a German state which after the fulfilment of the civilising mission for which it was placed in the heart of south-eastern Europe, proudly demands entry into the federation of the German peoples.

Austria cannot take this step at once. The way is obstructed by treaties and menaces, but the day will come when it will be free. It is the only way to restore German-Austria, the only way to open up new prospects for the Danube area. If German-Austria enters the German federal state, the central European area is united at the decisive spot. The central

German area is then organically connected with the Jugoslav area and the Mediterranean sphere is placed in a relation with the Continent which is far superior to that of the mediæval union in an empire.

The conception of a harmonious political arrangement of the great central European area which will not, as the French desire, be defined by the triangle formed by joining the mouth of the Weser and the mouth of the Vistula to the Istrian plateau, but will extend from the mouth of the Rhine and the mouth of the Niemen to the sources of the Rhône and the mouth of the Danube; will attract to itself the Apennine peninsula and so enter the Mediterranean sphere—this conception has already been influential in European history since Charlemagne was buried at Aachen. The empire of the East Carolingians and the Holy Roman Empire had served it each in its own way. The Bismarkian Triplice had taken it up and fostered it until leadership passed from Berlin to Vienna. When the World War broke out it had disappeared. But it appeared above the chaos of the settlement and cannot again be lost. It will become a reality whenever the old states and the new have settled their frontiers with a mutual respect of national and racial conditions and unite in free co-operation to work out their commercial, cultural and political destiny. If German-Austria enters the German Reich the way is open for the realisation of the federal idea in Central Europe.

CHAPTER VI

BOHEMIA AND CZECH SUPREMACY

At Versailles Germany was bound in chains such as have never before been laid on a people. The veto placed on the union of Germany and Austria and the provisions of Article 80 of the Versailles treaty whereby Germany recognises the independence of Austria and her frontiers as fixed and unalterable, even if the League Council agrees to an alteration, originates in the fear lest Germany become strong again. That fear does not arise from the circumstances obtaining in Europe but from the consciences of all those states which misused victory in the war to mutilate Germany's national territory. Fear produced the veto and the veto to-day causes tension in the whole Danube valley.

The failure to appreciate the natural and spiritual kinship which united the Austrian Germans to the Germans of the Reich was not calculated to conjure the dangers which Czechs, Poles, Jugoslavs and Roumanians believed they ran when they adhered to the French imperialist system. The succession states cannot escape from the geographical, economic and cultural ties that bind them to Germanism without themselves collapsing. If they cannot overcome the fear which the shadow of German power strikes into them, they must do without the strength which comes to them from Germanism. It is true that Austria has lost the supremacy she so long possessed, but the succession states fail to recognise the significance of that historical process since they believe they are able to render Austria's maintenance difficult and to deny her the right of self-determination when actually they need Austria as means in order to live and the great German community as aid in order to prosper. It is not the distant, self-contained France which in 1918 again secured hegemony in Europe, but Germany living with them in Central Europe, and bound to them by colonisation, cultural influence and century-long leadership which is called to influence their future. None of the new states can evade this law, least of all those who have

established themselves as disintegrating agents in German territory although a frontal position against Germany has been assigned to them by France and their own policy voluntarily yields to the compulsion thereby put upon them.

That compulsion weighs most heavily on the inland state of Czechoslovakia which has been created in the heart of Central Europe, which guards the central position of Bohemia and also covers the Carpathian frontier.

Czechoslovakia is historically and geographically a hybrid state and lacks not only a proper geographical form but also national cohesion. She cannot be called a unitary state, for Slovakia is geographically, nationally and politically a subordinate part of the area in which the Czechs are masters. Nevertheless, this land, rich, fruitful and well stocked with mineral wealth, is capable of life and of development in so far as it keeps to the political rôle imposed on it by geography and history.

Czechoslovakia is no national state. In an area of 142,000 square kilometres it contains 6,000,000 Czechs, 4,000,000 Germans, 2,000,000 Slovaks and 1,000,000 Magyars and Ruthenes. It contradicts the principle of nationalities. The Germans are settled in the mountains of the frontier, in the valleys leading to Bohemia, and in the towns of Bohemia and Moravia. The Slovaks and the fragments of the Magyar and Ruthenian peoples fill its eastern half. The Czech rulers are concentrated in Central Bohemia, on the Moldau, on the Sazawa and the Upper Elbe, and are most firmly rooted in north-east Bohemia where the fertile loose soil originally induced the Slav peasants to settle.

The German districts on the edge of the state are directly connected with the German border states of Bavaria, Franconia, Thuringia, Saxony and Silesia. In the wooded mountains on the Bavarian-Bohemian border, in the Fichtel and Erz ranges and in the Sudetian hills the Germans live in great numbers on both sides of the frontier. The Upper Moldau, the sources of the Beraun, the Upper and Middle Eger, the Elbe valley at Leitmeritz, the sources of the Elbe, the Zwistará and the March—round these the Germans have settled. Budweis, Eger, Leitmeritz, Reichenberg, Trautenau and Iglau—the sally ports of the Bohemian fortress are in German hands,

Budweis guards the pass which leads to the Danube valley, Eger guards the historic Eger gate which connects the Bohemian glacis with Franconia; Leitmeritz stands where the Elbe breaks through the Erz range; Reichenberg covers the Lusatian plain; Landskron and Trautenau guard the most important Sudetian passes; and Iglau commands the roads which lead across the Moravian plateau to the Thaia and the March. On the contrary, Prague, the strategic, political and spiritual centre of Bohemia, has been gradually lost to Germanism. From it to-day the Czechs rule the land.

On the Moravian glacis, which drops in two sections to the Danube, the Germans dwell in towns which hold the keys of the mountain barrier. Brünn looks south to the Marchfeld, Olmütz locks the north-west gate. The line Krems–Znaim–Brünn–Olmütz–Oderburg marks the outer edge of the Bohemian bastion.

The land of the Slovaks which runs from Bohemia to the east and south-east and descends to the Danube and the Theiss, fell to the Magyars by natural law. The Slovak, who has been delivered over to the Czechs, has changed his front yet has not lost his servitude, but he was not consulted. The reason of the change was the desire to break the north rampart of Hungary and assure strategic connection between Czechoslovakia and Poland. In order to confine Hungary to the exposed Theiss basin and to allow Roumania and Czechoslovakia to be geographically connected the Ruthenes were also added to the Czech state, which now ran parallel to the Carpathians as far as the sources of the Theiss. From Teschen to Marmaros-Sziget the passes of the Beskid and Carpathian ranges are all in Czech hands. The encirclement of Germany and Hungary is thus secured by a double line of circumvallation.

As a result the Czechoslovak state is neither a national unity nor a geographical whole. It includes four races and three nationalities and is divided into two parts which tend to fly apart rather than come together. It was constructed by France according to strategic laws and so it invites discussion from the strategic viewpoint. The historic citadel of Central Europe has been made France's citadel, but its position appears stronger than it is. Like any other stronghold the Bohemian

fortress requires a wide stretch of organised country in front of it and security in the rear in order to fulfil its double task of protection and intimidation. Bohemia possessed both so long as it was not isolated, but formed the eastern bastion of the Holy Roman Empire and was united to Austria and Hungary. Without political connection with one of the countries which lie exposed in the west or south, Bohemia is not able to make its influence felt at a distance. Its garrison can certainly sally out by one of the natural gates and win a transitory success, but strategically it is exposed to assault and always depended on relief from without. If Czechoslovakia were involved in a war in which it was directly attacked the Czechs would perceive with terror the truth of this law. Seldom has Bohemia been victoriously defended on her natural ramparts; usually after a short time she has fallen to a determined concentric attack.

The first campaign in history undertaken against Bohemia was after Marbod had formed the German Marcomanni into a military empire. It showed the vulnerability of Bohemia. The Romans advanced concentrically from the Rhine and the Danube in order to break into Bohemia by the Main and the March. Their columns forced the Eger gates and the approaches of the March glacis and were already tactically united when the Pannonian rising compelled them to retreat. The second, which saw the Marcomanni at war with the Germans of the north-west, shows us the contrary principle at work. Marbod sallied from his fortress and met the coalition army of Arminius on the north-west glacis; at the Saale gates he was defeated and flung back impotent to Bohemia. Both in defence and attack Bohemia had failed.

In early history there is only one instance of a ruler in Bohemia leading forth his armies to a decisive victory. That is the Frank Samo, but he did not rely solely on Bohemia, but had behind him the whole Slav population which had entered the area abandoned by the Germans between the Dnieper and the Elbe and had overflowed the whole eastern half of Central Europe from the Baltic to the Adriatic. When the Marcomanni left Bohemia, the bastion of Central Europe, once the advanced post of the Germano-Latin west, was pressed into the service of Slavism and turned against the west. With the

support of the Czechs Samo created a kingdom which for the first time connected the Elbe with the Danube and reached from the Erz to the Karawanken mountains. It was the first attempt at a centrally-conceived Danubian state. A German with Slav followers had called it into existence.

Samo reached the Neckar, but his kingdom disappeared at his death and the Slav flood retreated before the German counter pressure. The Bohemian Forest marks the western line of Slav expansion ; the Germans failed to pursue them and there they have remained to this day.

Bohemia became a Slav citadel. It maintained its position as such not so much by war as by the obstinate way in which the Czechs held to the land they had won. When the Czechs submitted to the Carolingians they were much less severely injured than the Saxons who had fought Charlemagne for thirty years. They let the tempests pass over them, submitted to the Magyars, and in spite of the recognition of Carolingian suzerainty never lost sight of their aim, but attacked the Thuringians and Bavarians. Lower Saxony and Bavaria bore the brunt of the war which threatened East Frankish territory and in spite of their losses guarded the front which had been broken in the centre by the Bohemians. Bavaria became the main German position towards the east not only against the Magyars but also against the Czechs. Even although the Czechs had been converted to Christianity, Bohemia, which the Germans had abandoned, threatened royal Ratisbon.

When Otto II separated Bohemia from the diocese of Ratisbon and founded the Bishopric of Prague, the Czechs entered on a new path. Their duke, Boleslav II, recognised the advantage of the inclusion of Bohemia in the Holy Roman Empire and embarked on eastern conquest. Instead of being a Slav sally port against the west the Bohemian fortress was turned against the east. Its position assured, it was open to German influence and the civilisation that influence brought and received the support of which it had so long been deprived. But again it was shown that Bohemia is not able to become a widely-extended Power. Boleslav II conquered Moravia, Silesia and western Galicia, but could not hold his conquests from Prague. Boleslav III lost them to Poland, which had extended its power from the Baltic to the March and shortly

afterwards invaded Bohemia from Moravia and Lusatia. Henry II came to Boleslav's aid and won back the land for the empire and the Premyslid dynasty. He rescued Moravia and added the strategic position of Eger to Germany.

Bohemia had found her natural frontier. It lay defended against north and east, by the Eger district was firmly connected with Bavaria and the Empire, and soon became strong and prosperous. The ambition of the Premyslids, however, once again lured the Czechs into far countries and in the XIIIth century held before them the vision of a great empire. For the third time the Bohemian fortress changed front. It opened its sally ports against the south. Its dukes, made kings by the Hohenstaufens, advanced the frontier across the Danube to the Save. Ottokar II became lord of the Austrian mainland. A great Central European empire of Slav origin cast the rays of its splendour from the Baltic to the Adriatic.

Bohemia had, it is true, received German civilisation from the German settlers summoned by the Premyslids and was covered with flourishing German towns, while there was Hohenstaufen blood in the veins of Ottokar II, but the land and its ruler remained in the Czech tradition. But Ottokar overestimated his strength. When he was defeated in his war with Rudolf of Habsburg his artificial empire broke in pieces. His son Venceslas II submitted to the new German emperor and held Bohemia as fief. The power of the Habsburg raised itself in the lands of the Alps and the Danube.

Consequently for a fourth time Bohemia changed front. She opened the sally ports against north and east and sought to set foot in Poland, Upper Silesia and Saxony. Ottokar's able son did not go to war but used the treasure which the silver mines of Kuttenberg and Iglau yielded him. He pledged his imperial possessions, got himself elected king of Poland and sought to win for his son the crown of St. Stephen which lacked a wearer after the extinction in 1301 of the House of Arpad. Once again, high ambitions were entertained in the Bohemian fortress.

After the murder of Venceslas III the Bohemian power waned owing to dynastic quarrels, while national strife began in the Bohemian valleys. The Germans who inhabited the towns and had flourishing domains and the Slavs who were

either depressed peasants or ambitious nobles bent on curtailing the privileges of the towns, divided into two hostile camps. The Czech began to regard himself as lord of the soil and to regard the German as an intruder; the German threw his weight into the scales and depressed them to his advantage.

When Charles IV of Bohemia of the House of Luxemburg ascended the imperial throne Bohemia became the centre of gravity of the Holy Roman Empire. But no duration was granted to a realm which recalled the days of Samo and Ottokar, in spite of the extraordinary cultural progress which Charles, with German help, had caused. When Venceslas IV, the eldest son of Charles IV, became Emperor, the Empire and Bohemia were flung into ever growing confusion. A Bohemian was not capable of renewing the Holy Roman Empire on a German national basis and raising Bohemia to be the Imperial citadel.

Bohemia lived a tormented life. She remained in the German sphere until the Hussite wars emerged from the citadel of Europe and the great struggle for Czech independence began. It developed on double lines, national and social, but its basic religious character was so strong that it swept up Czechs and Germans, masters and workmen, townsmen and peasants, and mixed them in leagues and counter leagues, sects and schisms, until the revolutionary movement exhausted itself. For a generation the Hussites ruled Bohemia and often emerged to win victories outside it, but they never succeeded in organising a state and expanding. For a moment an alliance with Poland and Lithuania attracted them when Vitold of Lithuania raised the banner of pan-Slavism above the *mêlée*, but shortly after the movement fell back within the Bohemian hills. Nevertheless, the Hussite campaigns mark the greatest development of Czech power. The "Bohemian nation" made itself a terror to the grand dukes and territorial lords, to the Empire, to Hungary, to the Pope and the Emperor and freed itself internally from foreign domination.

Bohemia paid dearly for the awakening of Czech nationalism. The towns stood desolate, thousands of the German settlers who were responsible for the culture had been killed or driven out and their possessions confiscated, 550 churches lay in ruins. The strengthening of the Czechs in the end did

Germanism untold harm and led centuries after to the creation of a Czechoslovak state, but who knows whether this consciousness of strength during the Hussite wars did not prevent the subjugation of the Czechs by the Poles and Lithuanians and so act as barrier against pan-Slavist expansion? To-day there is no thought of Poland dominating the Czechs. The two new Slav states obey the law of their continental position which orders them to form a single front, but nevertheless they stand over against Germany as rivals. Their kingdoms meet in the Moravian plain and on the Carpathians. A strong Bohemia and a strong Poland have never agreed.

When Casimir IV of Poland conquered West Prussia from the Teutonic Order and made East Prussia a Polish fief, the Czech state which George of Podiebrad, as a ruler of Czech blood and heir of the Hussite revolution, had brought under his rule, at once rose against imperialist Poland in order to restore the balance of power it had destroyed. George won from the Grand-duke Frederick II of Brandenburg the Lusatian passes and added that region to the Bohemian kingdom. The Poles kept Casimir's conquests for three centuries; the Czechs kept Lusatia for one and a half. This was the decisive advance of the organised Slav states into the German colonisation region between the Elbe and the Oder and in the Vistula basin. It is of historical significance, for in 1919 it strengthened the case of Poland and her French protector in the claim to the mouth of the Vistula.

George founded no dynasty. When his Hungarian rival, Matthias Corvinus, conquered Moravia and got himself elected King of Bohemia at Olmütz, George persuaded the Bohemian estates to elect Vladislav of Poland as his own successor and retained only the family property for his own sons. It was a masterly move. He drew the Bohemian Catholics, the Poles, the Pope and the Emperor to his side and left Matthias universal hostility as his dying gift. The situation on the Danube and the Moldau was thereby completely altered. When the death of Matthias left Hungary kingless, the crown of St. Stephen was given to the Polish King of Bohemia. Then the political and geographical position of subordination which is imposed upon Bohemia in relation to the Danube valley and the states therein was confirmed.

Vladislav made Buda instead of Prague the capital of the Hungaro-Bohemian Power. The political centre of gravity was removed to the Danube valley. But this change to the policy of obtaining geographical frontiers came too late. The Magyar power was already exhausted and the Turk was master of the hour.

When in 1526 Vladislav's son Louis fell with the flower of the Magyar chivalry on the field of Mohacz, Hungary was divided into three parts and the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria as husband of Anna of Hungary received the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, Bohemia became the northern march and the flank area of the rising Great Power, Austria. Historical development has brought us back to the circumstances which had governed Marbod's empire and compelled the Romans to break open the natural fortress in front of the Danube frontier or to join it to their world empire by a system of federation. When Bohemia was joined to Austria the conditions which had brought it out of its isolation were completed. But there were still unsolved religious and political problems and Bohemia's fate was once again decided by the issue of the great struggle which Austria fought for the headship of Germany. The connection of this struggle with the French advance to the Rhine produced not a few strategic developments which affected not merely the Rhine but the Bohemian glacis and even the interior of the Bohemian area and found there bloody issue. It is therefore advisable to treat of Bohemia after her union with Austria in the light of military history in order to complete the circle which brings us to the Czechoslovak state of to-day.

The first battle which was of consequence to Bohemia after its entry to the Habsburg circle was in the Schmalkald war at Mühlberg on the Saxon glacis. No Bohemians fought under the Austrian standards for the descendants of the Hussites refused to follow Ferdinand of Austria because of his measures against Protestantism. Now he punished them heavily, destroying their privileges and the freedom of the towns, and bringing them under the law of his house. It was the beginning of the policy of depriving the Czechs of their rights which Ferdinand left as a legacy to his successors. It led to the rebellion of Bohemia against Ferdinand II, to the election

as king of the Elector Frederick and to the Thirty Years' War. In the XVIIth century Bohemia was a European battlefield ; it paid the price of its central position. The lost battle at the White Mountain on November 8, 1620, was the last battle in which Bohemia, mindful of the Hussite past, fought on its own soil under its own flag. Thereafter Bohemia was Austria's base of operations. It served according to circumstances as a base for distant expeditions, as a refuge for beaten armies, as a flank protection for the Danube lands and as an area of concentration for new armies, and when the Thirty Years' War was over had shown its incomparable value as the citadel of Austria.

Not a single campaign reached Vienna. Saxons and Swedes exhausted their strength in Bohemia and Moravia. None of their victories had strategic results, and the Imperialists invariably strengthened themselves between Eger and Olmütz to new activity. Wallenstein fell on Nuremberg and Leipzig from Bohemia and checked Mansfeld and Bethlen Gabor in Moravia. This strategic situation was the result of the close connection of Bohemia with the Danube line and the land to the south.

The military history of the XIXth century brought Bohemia further into the foreground than the XVIIth and revealed again the connection of Moravia and Bohemia with the Danube lands. The imperialist war of Louis XIV and the War of the Spanish Succession did not disturb Bohemia's frontiers and left her to play the rôle of concentration area for Austria. The War of the Polish Succession which gave France the opportunity to " pinch off something " in the west from the German Empire and move nearer the Rhine did, however, disturb Bohemia's peace. That was in the summer of 1735 when a Russian army—guests never yet seen on German territory—marched through Moravia, Bohemia and Franconia to the Rhine. The Russians never fought a battle but they bore the standards of the new Slav power to which the Balkan Slavs looked hopefully. The Bohemians made the acquaintance of the Russia of Peter the Great. In this war Bohemia was a military highway ; in its successors—the War of the Austrian Succession and the Silesian War—it was a European theatre of war.

In the former the French advanced east as the ally of Bavaria, crossed the Bavarian highlands, broke into Bohemia and took Prague. But their triumph was premature. The Austrians marched from Vienna to Passau, broke the flank guard between Linz and Passau, made the enemy's positions untenable and forced him to retire on the Rhine. For the first time Bohemia served as a flank bastion against the west. In the Seven Years' War, Bohemia played the same part of guarding the Danube lands from attack. Frederick the Great, who had in the second Silesian War reached the Moravian ridge without reaching the Danube valley, no longer attempted to pass by way of Kolin. He fought north of the Erz range, drove the French from the field at Rossbach, won the victory of Leuthen and moved in ever narrower circles on the Saxon and Silesian glacis, always drawing the net closer until, its strength exhausted, the coalition against him ceased fighting and Maria Teresa surrendered Silesia. Nevertheless, Bohemia had fulfilled its functions, but the Saxon glacis had been turned on the south and the rôle of the Bohemia bastion was now one of defence against the north.

For forty years Bohemia enjoyed peace, and then the Moravian glacis saw one of the greatest battles of history. Napoleon, marching from his operations base on the Rhine, outflanked the Austrians on the Danube, marched in pursuit of the Russo-Austrian army on Vienna and on December 2, 1805, defeated it at Austerlitz. In this campaign Bohemia was cut off from the Danube and so played no strategical part.

Napoleon's genius had laid down the lines of the campaign, but the preliminary political conditions for this brilliant stab to the heart were all in his favour. If France is established on both banks of the Rhine and finds no enemy at the passes of the Taunus and the Black Forest, her armies can march undisturbed between the Iller and the Inn and fight at their own pleasure. That was clearly seen in the Wars of the Spanish and Austrian Successions, in the Seven Years' War and in the Napoleonic campaigns, and the position is in no way altered to-day.

In the War of the Spanish Succession France succumbed because Britain, Germany and Holland fought together; in the War of the Austrian Succession the French marshals, in spite

of the capture of Prague, shrunk from a decisive trial of strength; in the Seven Years' War, Frederick drove them from the decisive field of Rossbach; in 1805 France was successful, not simply because of the genius of Napoleon, but also because Prussia stayed inactive on Napoleon's flank. When later Prussia fought isolated she paid dearly for her error. No Austrian army stood ready to help her in the classic invasion base in Bohemia when she was shattered at Jena and Auerstädt.

The fall of Prussia placed in Napoleon's power the Elbe frontier, and the Saxon glacis became the French base of operations. When in 1807 Napoleon made peace with the Tsar, destroyed Prussia as a Power and secured the Oder line, Bohemia was surrounded on the north, the west and the east. Bavaria and Saxony belonged to the Confederation of the Rhine and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was called into existence. From Cracow to Prague Austria was threatened by Poland and Saxony. Her forces could no longer advance into Bavaria without concentrating important effectives in Bohemia and Little Poland and leaving strong flank guards on the Elbe and the Vistula. In 1809 Napoleon broke through by way of Ratisbon, and marched straight on Vienna. The decisive battles were fought at Aspern and Essling, on the Danube plain, and at Wagram on the edge of the March valley. When the Archduke Charles retreated from Wagram on July 5th, the fortress of Bohemia was completely invested. Austria sued for peace and Napoleon marched, based on the uncovered Bohemian flank area, between the Oder and the Vistula against Russia.

Only when his star waned in Muscovy and when in 1813 he collected all the available strength of France and the client states to strike at the heart of Germany, Bohemia emerged again to importance. The Emperor was still able to appear on the Elbe, to meet Prussians and Russians in Saxony and threaten Austria from the Inn and the Elbe, the Bavarians still held undisturbed the western flank, and the Saxons the north flank of the Bohemian citadel, but already the storm was gathering behind the Erz range and in the Böhmerwald. While Napoleon fought the battles of Grossgörschen and Bautzen, the Austrians concentrated in Bohemia. On August 12th

Austria joined the fourth coalition and soon an allied army of 220,000 men under Schwarzenberg was threatening Napoleon's flank at Teplitz. When the latter drove Blücher over the Katzbach, Schwarzenberg emerged from Bohemia in his rear and marched on Dresden. Napoleon turned back, defeated him before that city but saw the enemy disappear unhindered into the mountains. When, pressed from north and east, Napoleon made Leipzig, instead of Dresden, the strategic centre of gravity, the sally ports of the Bohemian fortress again opened. The allies concentrated round Leipzig. At this moment Bohemia recovered its fundamental importance as Austria's base for attack. The Saxon glacis was the scene of the Battle of the Nations.

From 1814 to 1866 Bohemia saw no enemy, but in these years became the main strategic position of Austria in her contest for headship in the German Confederation and for supremacy in Central Europe. Silesia was lost, but Saxony and Bavaria were again closely bound to Bohemia, which covered Austria against Prussia and in 1866 allowed her to march on interior lines to a decisive battle while her southern army defeated the Italians. The first campaign which burst open the Bohemian fortress and opened the way to Vienna and Pressburg, drove Austria from her position in Germany. The Austrian army of the north moved on a flank march from Olmütz to the Elbe in order to anticipate the Prussians at the passes, but the Prussians obtained the initiative, forced the Saxons to retreat, defeated the Austrian advanced corps and united their forces at Königgrätz while the decisive battle was in progress.

Bohemia's strategic rôle in Austria was at an end. When the Dual Monarchy and the German Empire became allies and Austria turned against the east, Bohemia lost its fortress character and ceased also to be either a base for attack or a military highway.

The political rôle which Bohemia played in the life of Austria did not end with the strategic rôle. When Europe was bowed under the yoke of the Holy Alliance but had found in the Pentarchy a strong buttress of peace, Bohemia lay in the system of Metternich still in that dumbness to which it had been condemned in 1627. Things changed, however, when

the second great wave of revolution broke from Paris over the whole Continent. The disunion in Bohemia caused by the compulsion on Germans and Slavs to form one community became an open conflict. The Germans looked to Frankfort; the Czechs turned to the east and appealed to pan-Slavism as their saviour from "the German peril." Prague was the seat of a Slav congress. When 1848 ended, the Czechs stood by the Government; the Germans were part of the progressive opposition. The quarrel of nationalism had driven the Slavs to support the reaction. They used the position so created to establish their influence and in 1859, after the disaster at Solferino, they demanded the recreation of the Bohemian kingdom and supremacy in the Bohemian state. When both demands were refused and the Germans took up the battle for the maintenance of German rights, the Czechs turned from Austria to Russia. They persisted for a considerable time in passive opposition and then, supported by pan-Slavist propaganda, took the offensive against the weak ministries which ruled the nationalities of Austria, for the settlement of the great conflicts whose final aim was the erection of a great Czech national state. In face of this ambition, which was served by the open policy of the Young Czechs, the secret societies and the revolutionary alliance with Russian pan-Slavism, the weak policy of compromise which was followed by Vienna with the motto "reconciliation of the nationalities" was a failure. The attempt to square the circle miscarried.

The Czechs were the passionate instigators of trouble. When the World War broke out, they broke loose from the Dual Monarchy. Czech political leaders fled to Russia and France; Czech regiments sullenly took the field and soon left thousands of prisoners and deserters in enemy hands which formed the Czech legions in Siberia, in the course of time became an army of 200,000 men, and in 1917 under the national flag and French leadership attacked the German, Austrian and Hungarian lines. The politicians who had fled to Paris at the beginning of the war had already in 1915 formed a revolutionary government and in November addressed a communication to the Austrian Government which was tantamount to a declaration of war. The Czechs no longer fought for Austria or Bohemia, but for an independent self-supporting Slavic kingdom. They

were able to overcome all opposition and to win British, French and Russian support for their policy. So long as Tsarism remained, they professed themselves in favour of the restoration of the kingdom of Venceslas under a Russian Grand Duke, but, when the Russian revolution came, they willingly followed their leaders who formed an oligarchy in the effort to create a Czechoslovak republic.

On September 28, 1918, while the cannon still thundered, France made an alliance with the Czechs and recognised them as an allied belligerent state. France promised to help them " to freedom and the resurrection of the independent Czechoslovak state within its historic frontiers " and plead the Czech cause at Versailles as their own. To leave no doubt regarding the position of these frontiers, the Czechs advanced into Teschen on January 23, 1919, and drove out the Polish garrison. In the same year they crossed the Silesian frontier and occupied the district of Hultschin, which is inhabited by Germans ; a district which for strategic reasons France was glad to see in their possession. A Frenchman, General Pellé, who had fought with distinction at Compiègne and the Crozat canal assumed the position of Chief of the General Staff of the Czech army, which was composed of ex-Austrian regular soldiers and the members of the athletic clubs, in order to defend the extensive frontiers of the new state against Poles and Hungarians and to threaten Germany, Austria and Hungary on the flank. Bohemia became a French fortress and received the mission to act as a central flank position in the heart of Central Europe. The resurrection of the Czech state is seen as part of the French system of hegemony.

The Americans in vain tried at Versailles to separate from Czechoslovakia the Bohemian districts with a German population. Wilson's proposal failed because of the treaties which France had signed with the Czechs and the attempt to make the new state really a national one remained a dead letter. The Czechs took over all power in it. The Czech language was given precedence over all others ; the Germans were refused recognition as a legal unit and the electoral areas were so drawn that the German area was deprived of part of its political rights. In order to strengthen the nationalism of the Czech state the day of Huss's death was made the national com-

memoration day. The celebrations did honour not to the teacher of Hussism, but to the champion of Czech nationalism. Schismatic movements among the Czech clergy who demanded the creation of a national Czechoslovak church, were an effort in the same direction. The Germans, however, issued an appeal to their fellow nationals in which they declared that they would enter the Czechoslovak national assembly with the immovable aim of securing for their people the immutable right to self-determination and liberty, that there would never be peace between the Germans and the Czech rulers, and that the state which they had been forced to enter against their wills would never attain tranquillity until they were treated as equal and free citizens and the peaceful development of the German element was constitutionally guaranteed.

That proclamation well illustrates the national problems which endanger the internal life of Czechoslovakia. Conceived of as a nationalities state, actually functioning as a national state, considered an independent, historically mature Power but actually bound to the French system of hegemony, Czechoslovakia internally and externally fights on two fronts. The versatility and energy of the Czech race should not mislead one as to the difficulties which the prosecution of this disintegrating policy will encounter in the geographical unity of its central position. Bohemia is a central country but the position of a Central Power is not now allotted to her. Czech policy in 1919 sought to make Prague " the diplomatic centre of all Central Europe " and to treat Germany as " an unfinished picture " and weighed the fate of Vienna and Budapest in the Czech balance. That was in the exuberance of the moment; it was in opposition to the geographical and dynamic forces at work.

Czechoslovakia will learn that France has not the strength to guarantee a central European inland state against being reduced to its national boundaries. Prague will never be the diplomatic centre of Central Europe but, on the contrary, feels the attractive power of its neighbours. Czechoslovakia can only reach stability as a member of a Central European state system.

When under the ægis of France, Czechoslovakia made alliances with Roumania and Jugoslavia and made overtures

to Poland, she yielded to the force of the obligations she had assumed and to the conditions imposed at her birth. Her future depends on her liberation from the chains thus placed upon her. So long as she considers herself internally and externally as a Slav outwork against Germanism and seeks security in the client relationship which binds her to France, she acts against the laws of geography and the continuity of history.

Bohemia was intended to be the forward area of a great Danubian monarchy, to act as its base for attack and its flank protection; as the citadel of Central Europe she can fulfil a mission of reconciliation only if she refuses to take up a threatening position in the midst of the German area. Only when the Czechs realise that not Germanism which has united 70,000,000 souls in Germany, Bohemia and Austria, but Czechism which with the Slovaks can show barely 9,000,000, is held back by history, by nature and by economic development, and without prejudice to their nationality, fit themselves for higher destinies, will the curse of Versailles laid upon their state at its birth lose its force.

CHAPTER VII

POLAND OLD AND NEW

POLAND has arisen. Its resurrection is the most significant event in the re-organisation of Europe, but it does not make for peace. Destiny placed the Poles after the great Slav migrations in a plain which had room for many Slav peoples. The Poles settled at the Pripet marshes on the Niemen and in the Vistula basin, but the great feudal state of Poland which once extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea was a loosely-knit Power not attached to the soil nor contented with the area it possessed. The kernel of Poland is in the Vistula valley which runs from the Jablonika mountains to the Thorn depression. The tributaries which the Vistula receives in this section,—the Demajec, Nida, Visloka, San, Wieprz, Pilica, Narev, Bug, Vrka and Ogloviaczka—round off this area to an orographically defined, centralised whole. The centre of gravity of old Poland from the XIIIth century lay between Cracow and Warsaw.

The Polish state, as created at Versailles out of portions of Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary, extends far beyond this area. The German sword in the World War carved for Poland the way to freedom, but it was the victorious coalition that drew her frontiers. Polish ambitions extended them still farther. The Czechs took Teschen, the Poles, Vilna. Germany saw herself thrown back from the Prosna and the lower Vistula on the Oder. East Prussia became an island surrounded by a Polono-Lithuanian sea. Thanks to her frontiers Poland belongs to the central continental mass which is the centre of Europe. She has extended so far to the north and east that she has entered the Russian and Lithuanian areas and also appears to be gravitating to the north and so becoming part of the eastern European area. The Polish state is therefore forced to a double policy which is beyond its strength to pursue and has been already condemned by past history. As a result, the newly-created continental states also must pursue a policy of two fronts which implies the maintenance of a

frontal position against Germany, Austria and Hungary, and also the necessity to defend their outer flanks. Resurrected Poland realises well enough from her past history how tragic is the rôle that French imperialism has condemned her to play. The Powers at Versailles did what they could to stimulate her ambition; and they gave her a domain which recalls the proudest days of her history.

Polish history is dominated by ungovernable forces. German history, too, displays the same rises and falls, greatness and littleness, but it is so deeply bound up with world history and was played out in so important a geographical area that the mission of the German nation cannot be separated from the general sequence of world events. Polish history developed on eccentric lines and rarely acts decisively on the general course of European development.

When Mscislav I in the Xth century united the Poles, who were scattered in the pasture lands and forests round the Vistula, the Warthe and the Oder, and adopted Christianity, Otto the Great had raised the Germanic Holy Roman Empire to be the chief Power in the west. The Poles at first stood outside it, but the newly-founded bishopric of Posen came under the Archbishop of Magdeburg and the Polish duke accompanied the Emperor against Boleslav I of Bohemia, who had forgotten his oath of allegiance. By this campaign Mscislav won the East Silesian glacis and left to his son Boleslav the expectation of a great kingdom. Poland's expansion proceeded rapidly. Boleslav Chobry, the sixth historical Piast ruler, raised Poland to the heights of power at the end of the century. He conquered Cracow, Sandomir and Danzig, subdued Pomerania, Silesia, Moravia, Slovakia and East Galicia, supplanted Bohemia as the greatest Slav Power, separated the Polish from the German church by the creation of the Archbishopric of Gniesen and made Poland the leading Power in the east.

Soon came the first decline. His son Mscislav II lost all the conquests and the kingdom fell to pieces by divisions of inheritance, quarrels and civil wars, which lasted for three centuries. The minor princes and the feudal nobility cared nothing for the royal authority and the development of the state was crippled. Then came a sudden and even more

remarkable expansion. It falls into three stages and ends with the creation of a politically unified state which surpassed the empire of Boleslav Chobry.

This expansion began when Venceslas II was crowned king in 1300. Casimir III completed the first stage about the middle of the XIVth century. Cleverly making sacrifices in the west, where he left to the Teutonic Orders Pomerania, Nessau and Kulm, he took their Silesian possessions from the Bohemians and consolidated his kingdom on the Vistula and the Dniester. He conquered the Russian principalities of Halicz and Vladimir, defeated the Lithuanians, reduced the independent Polish duchies, induced the Emperor Charles IV to renounce suzerainty over Masovia, gave Poland her first code of laws, organised the army, summoned German colonists, built castles and towns, founded monasteries and hospitals, welcomed the Jews and, despite his love of display, ruled his realm with extraordinary wisdom and strength. He was the last ruler of the Piast dynasty and rightly bears the appellation of "the Great." When he died at Cracow in 1370 without leaving an heir, his throne fell to his sister's son Louis, king of Hungary, an Angevin. Louis as king of Poland followed the policy set by Casimir and at the wish of the Polish nobility married his daughter Hedwig to the Grand Duke Jagello of Lithuania, who ascended the Polish throne as Vladislav II. The race of Louis was not perpetuated but, through his marriage with Sophia, a princess of Kisv, who bore him two sons, Jagello founded a dynasty and on July 15, 1410, led Poles and Lithuanians to victory at Tannenberg. When the Teutonic Orders, who had saved the Poles in the XIIIth century from the Prussians, yielded to the united Slav Power the Polish-Lithuanian power acquired stability.

Before he died, Jagello saw Cracow, Warsaw and Vilna in one strong kingdom, saw the Dnieper from Smolensk to Kieff flow through Polish territory, saw Red Russia and Podolia "indissolubly" joined to the Polish crown and 30,000,000 people living on Polish territory in an area of nearly 1,000,000 square kilometres. His son, Vladislav III, who ascended the throne in 1434, became also king of Hungary, and as ruler of both countries fell in battle with the Turks at Varna. The second son of Jagello, Casimir IV, succeeded and took from

the Teutonic Order West Prussia and Ermeland and fixed the Polish centre of gravity yet more firmly in the Vistula area. Three sons of Casimir occupied the throne in succession and by desperate fighting maintained the frontiers won by Jagello. The third, Sigismund I, warded off the Russians and Tartars, ended the struggle with the Teutonic Order and spread luxury and culture throughout his wealthy realms.

His son, Sigismund II, summoned a national assembly at Lublin in 1568 which agreed to the union of Lithuania, West Prussia, Volhynia, Podolia and the Ukraine in a military state and with that the Polish kingdom arrived at the height of its power. The last of the Jagellons saw Poland's greatest hour, politically and culturally, but he took the power of the crown with him to the grave and left the field to the nobility. The state which had known in the Piasts and the Jagellons two great dynasties returned to the method of free election to find a king.

The first elected king was Henri of Anjou. France made her appearance in the north of eastern Europe and her first attempt to encircle Europe with the help of Poland. Already the Turk had been won by Francis I as ally against the House of Habsburg and Germanism and now France set in motion Catholic Poland. The death of Charles XII caused Henri to return to France to win the throne of France without renouncing that of Poland. French policy kept the act of election in reserve so as to raise a French claim to the empty throne at a suitable time. Poland elected Stephan Bathory, the voivode of Siebenbürgen, to take Henri's place. A belated imitator of George of Podiebrad and Matthias Corvinus appeared in the field. He allied himself with Sweden for a war against Russia, which was endeavouring to win the Baltic coast after shaking off the Tartar yoke, defeated Ivan the Terrible at Wenden, conquered Livonia, left Ingermanland and Narva to the Swedes, advanced into Muscovy and compelled the Tsar to make peace. He secured the services of the Zaporogue Cossacks to serve as Polish outposts against the Turks between the Bug and the Dnieper. In Poland he appears as a champion of Catholicism; Protestantism and humanism, which had exercised a deep influence on Poland, waned.

Bathory's career was short. When he died in 1586 the

St. Martin's summer brilliance of the rule of the nobility began to pale. A Catholic prince of the house of Vasa who, on his mother's side, was of Jagellon descent, was crowned after a hotly-contested election as Sigismund III. When he succeeded in 1592 to the throne of Sweden, there appeared the vision of a gigantic Baltic kingdom, but the Swedes revolted against a Catholic king, defeated the Polish armies and chose as their ruler Sigismund's uncle, Charles IX. The great struggle for power in the Baltic between the Germanic north and the Slav east began.

Poland was still able to advance victoriously against Moscow, as ally of the false Dmitri, to storm the Kremlin, to occupy Smolensk and, after the death of the pretender, make Sigismund's son Vladislav Tsar; but then suddenly the whole edifice crashed upon the turbulent Polish nobility. The Russian people rose, and after four days' bloody fighting, drove Sigismund's army out of Moscow and threw it back on Smolensk. The Cossacks devastated Podolia and Volhynia, the Tartars of the Crimea invaded Polish territory and the Hospodar of Wallachia and the Turks took the field against Sigismund. On the threatened fronts the Polish nobles fought at their best, but were defeated by Gustavus Adolphus who, after the death of Charles IX, captured Livonia and West Prussia and only made peace with the Polish nobles when summoned to the great war in Germany. Poland's star was setting.

Poland took no part in the Thirty Years' War, but Muscovites, Cossacks and Tartars crossed her frontiers, and the Swedes ruled the Baltic coast. The undisciplined nobility made obedience to their elected king, John Casimir, a matter of choice. When Charles X, the nephew of Gustavus, appeared at the gates of Warsaw, Poland's fate was united with that of Central Europe. By the Peace of Oliva she was deprived of the Baltic coast.

Mazarin was then the arbiter of Europe. In the name of France, he awarded Pomerania to the Swedes, as had been promised at Münster, and recognised Charles Gustavus's title to Livonia and Esthonia. Brandenburg secured three Polish districts.

The Poles realised their impotence. They accepted the

Oliva settlement and took comfort from the French mediation; for the first time Poland was involved in a European conflict of ambitions. In this conflict there was no place for a nation proud of its strong national characteristics and its great heroic past, but unable to concentrate its strength to form a closely knit state.

The Polish state, even in the days of Sigismund Vasa, had become a republic of nobles who mocked at the central authority. A century later indiscipline had become anarchy. When John Casimir, the last Vasa, abdicated to earn a pension from Louis XIV, Poland was hard pressed on all sides. White and Red Russia with the Ukraine had returned to Great Russia; Livonia and Esthonia were definitely lost, the suzerainty over Prussia had disappeared, the unity of the kingdom had been sacrificed to the intrigues and caprice of the nobles. The impulse of the Polish nation to expansion was wasted in an indefinite area which did not permit of the establishment of a clear purpose and had led a people, ever striving to emerge on all sides, from its inland position everywhere into foreign lands. The attempt to reach the Baltic and the Black Sea was extraordinarily fortunate; the Baltic was reached at the mouths of the Narva, the Dvina and the Vistula, and the Black Sea between the Dnieper and the Dniester, but in the end the overestimated national strength failed under the burden.

Not unwarned did Poland fall. At the Assembly of 1668 John Casimir prophesied that the reckless policy of the nobles and their right of freely electing their king would make Poland the slave of her neighbours, and that the Muscovites, the Austrians and the Brandenburgers would divide the possessions of the Piasts. Poland was, however, called upon to play a part which made her decline glorious and which, although it was a mere episode, made the falling kingdom appear to possess a European outlook and intimate connection with Central Europe. The last great elected king of Polish blood, John Sobieski, led the Poles to one of the decisive battles of the world. By the side of the Germans they fought to save Vienna from the Turks whom Louis XIV *sans déplaisir* saw before the last gate of the west, and destroyed the army of Kara Mustafa. But the victory brought no new

strength to Poland. When Sobieski died in 1696 the republic of the nobles became a toy for the absolutist Powers around it. The election of a king became an auction and the throne of the Jagellons went to the highest bidder. France first appeared as a bidder. She produced the Act of Election of Henri of Anjou to testify to a historic connection with Poland, and then produced a candidate at every election. When her alliance with Turkey appeared no longer useful, Poland acquired new importance as the eastern instrument of her continental policy. None of France's protégés placed the crown of Poland on his head, but the Polish disorders greatly aided France's Rhine policy. The first Frenchman who appeared in Warsaw was Prince Conti. He was defeated by the candidate of Austria and Russia, Augustus the Strong. The War of the Spanish Succession and the Northern War followed. East and west separated into two great camps. In the east and north Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Saxony and Russia, in the west, France, Spain, Savoy, England, Germany and Holland fought separately to reshape Europe. The Russia of Peter the Great had leaped like a lion into the European arena and fought her first European war by the side of her natural enemy, Poland. The youthful king of Sweden, Charles XII, defeated the Danes, threw the advancing Russians out of Esthonia, and fell upon Poland and Saxony. Augustus the Strong had promised his electors the conquest of Livonia, but the sword decided otherwise. Eight years after his imposing election, Augustus was dethroned and at the order of Charles the Assembly elected as his successor the starosta of Posen, Stanislas Leszczynski.

Now began the game controlled by the Powers for the throne of Poland which the Polish nobility, organised in confederations, gave away by a majority of votes. As Charles's vassal Leszczynski kept court in Warsaw until the Swedish king allowed himself to be lured into the Ukraine on a Russian campaign and after his defeat at Poltava fled to Bender. Then Augustus the Strong returned to Warsaw. But he found in Poland armed opposition and in 1716 was compelled by the Confederates to sign a treaty whereby the Saxon troops left the country. He was thankful for the mediation of Peter the Great, who maintained him on the

throne and made Russia for the first time the arbiter of Poland's fate. Russia protected Polish liberty in order to maintain Polish impotence. When Sweden, after Charles's death, made peace with his enemies, Poland kept her territory and Augustus his throne. Leszczynski saved only the title of king and withdrew to France.

When Augustus II died in 1733, Poland really ceased to be a state. She stood, a stranger in a condition of anarchy, in a changed world. From an outlying she had become a central state which created a political vacuum between Russia, Austria and Prussia. The aristocratic republic had degenerated into an aristocratic club in which the opposition of an individual—the *liberum veto*—prevented any decision being taken.

In its great days Poland was a federal state whose members were autonomous. Then came the veto, the opposition which any provincial deputy could raise against a resulution of the parliament of nobles on the ground of written, binding instructions from the province represented by him. As the decline progressed, the arbitrary claims of the individual grew. Poland was not a republic nor did it possess a representative parliament. Leibnitz in a short sentence described the Polish conception of the state: "*Persona reipublicæ in nobilitatis personam translata est.*"

As successor of Augustus, France proposed the ex-king Leszczynski. Russia and Austria proposed Augustus's son, Augustus III. This time France did not yield as in Conti's day without a struggle, but she left the Polish field for others to fight in when as the price of Leszczynski's withdrawal she acquired the duchies of Lorraine and Bar. The War of the Polish Succession followed—from the western standpoint a war for the Rhine; from the eastern, a trial of strength for Russia; from the Polish point of view a renunciation of sovereignty. In 1753 Poland had sunk to be an object of European policy. It was the beginning of the end. When in the Seven Years' War the Russian armies marched into Poland to assail Frederick the Great on his exposed flank, Poland became a glacis and Russia had begun her advance to the Vistula. The election of a successor in 1763 to Augustus III was no longer the concern of the Polish nobility; it was the business of all Europe. Austria and France decided on a

Saxon prince; Russia proposed Stanislas Poniatowski, a favourite of the Tsarina Catherine. The decision lay with the new Great Power, Prussia.

Frederick the Great and Catherine found themselves without allies at the conclusion of the Seven Years' War. Russia, whose seas could not be menaced, thought of remaining in splendid isolation in order to complete the work of Peter the Great on the Bosporus and the Baltic. Prussia, threatened on all sides, required support. England after the conquest of Canada had turned away from Europe to pursue an imperialist world policy and Frederick stood alone in face of France and Austria. He sought to obtain a Russian alliance, but the offer was coolly received. New prospects were opened by the Polish election. It was now Catherine who sought support from Prussia in order to secure the throne for Poniatowski and so obtain in Poland a flank protection against Austria. Then she could resume the march on Constantinople which had come to a standstill in 1739 at Azov and Chotin when Austria had made peace with the Turks at Belgrade. Frederick was ready to support Poniatowski but made his support conditional on the conclusion of a Russo-Prussian defensive alliance. Catherine hesitated, until the Saxon candidate appeared certain to win. Then she yielded and on August 11, 1764, signed a treaty with Frederick which guaranteed his possession of Silesia and removed his anxiety for his exposed eastern flank. Poniatowski was elected on September 1, 1764. He was the shadow king of a shadow kingdom, trembled at Catherine's frown, and had not the strength to control the internal disorder. When he showed himself unable to compose the struggle between the Jesuits and the Protestants and Greek Catholics the nobility split into two confederations. That of Radom represented the Dissenters, that of Bar the Catholics. The whole of eastern Europe was speedily in turmoil.

Russia acted first. Catherine sent an army against the confederates of Bar, drove their forces over the Turkish frontier. The Turks answered by declaring war and summoned the Tartars of the Crimea to their aid. This was the signal for Russia to advance on the Bosporus. Catherine summoned the Christian peoples of the Balkans to revolt, occupied Mol-

davia, entered Wallachia and sent the Baltic fleet under British officers to the Mediterranean. French officers hurried to Constantinople to defend the Dardanelles. Austria moved into Serbia and Galicia. The eastern question threatened to involve the Continent in a general war.

Again the decision lay with Prussia. Frederick used the Polish question as a diversion. He had paid subsidies to Russia in virtue of the treaty of 1764 and would have been compelled to to go war if Austria had answered the Russian advance over the Danube by an invasion on the Polish flank. When Austria seized the Polish district of Zips, once a Hungarian glacis peopled by German colonists, and occupied the strategic points of Neumarkt and Sandek which assured the crossings of the Dunajec, no delay was possible. Catherine offered Frederick Polish Ermeland to secure his help in a war with Austria and Turkey, but the King of Prussia saw that a solution must be sought on a broader basis. He proposed to the Tsarina to proceed to an occupation *à trois* of the Polish frontier districts in order to make Austria disarm and the Russians stay their advance.

In the autumn of 1772 the three Powers proceeded to the First Partition. The prophecy of John Casimir was fulfilled. Poland, exhausted by civil war, deprived of all state power, and since the entry of Russia into the European system, deprived of its historic mission of guardian of the eastern march, now was sacrificed to European peace. Russia took from her the districts on the eastern bank of the Dvina and the Dnieper; Austria, Galicia and Lodomiria; Prussia, Pomerellia, Ermeland, Kulm and the Netze district which separated East Prussia from Brandenburg-Pomerania. Austria and Russia expanded their territory; Prussia consolidated hers. Poland was driven back to the Vistula basin and the Dnieper. Frederick had thrown a land bridge from the Oder to the Pregel, had taken its island character from East Prussia, and proceeded to the economic exploitation and the moral conquest of his new possessions. Soon they attained new prosperity under Prussian rule. Frederick had no concern with the Polish homelands. Except for Danzig and Thorn, the sea and the land gate of Vistulan Prussia, Prussia had nothing more to wish for. But she knew that Russia's impulse to expansion was not

exhausted and with anxiety saw the Muscovites coming nearer.

Russia was master of the situation. When her adherents defeated the constitutional reform of 1791 and advanced in arms on Warsaw, she had no anxieties about the west, for Prussia and Austria were at war with the French Revolution. Accordingly, Prussia abandoned the French war to secure her eastern position. In vain, under Kosciusko, did the Poles fight against Russia and her adherents. The enemy had crossed the Dvina, conquered the Ukraine and held all Poland up to the Vistula in its power, when Frederick William II demanded his share in order to advance his frontiers further east. Catherine was dilatory, but, when a Prussian army appeared on the Vistula, the Russians made use of their power and forced the Diet to recognise the Second Partition. Russia took the whole east; Prussia, the German towns of Danzig and Thorn, the county of Posen and a great part of the Vistula basin. Russia took 250,000 square kilometres, Prussia 58,000 square kilometres, while Austria, involved in war on the Rhine, had to be content with the Bukovina which she had won from Turkey in 1776.

By the Second Partition Poland was pressed back on Cracow and Radom and here the distracted nation gathered itself for a desperate revolt; but while Prussia and Russia were preparing for an advance on Warsaw discord had already ruined its hopes. When Kosciusko was defeated by the Russians at Maciejowice the last resistance broke. Catherine compelled Poniatowski to sign the Third Partition and abdicate. Only the district of Cracow was left to Poland. Russia had the lion's share and faced Prussia on the Niemen. Austria who was this time in time received the Bug district; Prussia, Masovia and West Lithuania. Russia now appeared as an imperialist Power pressing westward and southward into Central Europe. Prussia and Austria sought to anticipate her advance and stay it at the Polish glacis.

Although Poland had disappeared, Polish nationalism survived. The nation never abandoned the dream of resurrecting the state it had itself slain. When Napoleon, nine years later, attacked Prussia, Poland was still a foreign body in the territory of its neighbours. That was not true of Polish West

Prussia, which Frederick the Great had really incorporated in the Prussian state, nor of Danzig and Thorn which, as German cities, were glad to be free of Polish rule, but it certainly was of South Prussia and Eastern Silesia which Prussia had obtained in 1795 and of the eastern districts taken by Austria and Russia. Napoleon after Austerlitz had conceived the design of summoning the Polish emigration to a crusade against Russia, but he did not think of creating a national Polish state. When he shattered the might of Russia and won over Alexander I and created a Grand Duchy of Warsaw for his own use, French continental policy had won a success sought for centuries. Danzig became the chief fortress of France on the Baltic.

Napoleon always gave strategic considerations the first place, and so he conceived of the Polish march as connecting the east of Europe with the French base of operations. That lay between the Elbe and the Oder, where all the fortresses and bridgeheads were garrisoned by French troops, and Saxony, as a member of the Confederation of the Rhine, guarded the communications between the Rhine and the Vistula. In order to connect properly this central position with the Vistula basin, Napoleon at Tilsit resolved to make a strategic road through Silesia, and so remove it from the Prussian state. The "Polish corridor" of to-day is only a revival, to meet changed conditions, of Napoleon's Silesian corridor.

After the defeat of Austria in 1809, Napoleon made the Grand Duchy of Warsaw a Vistulan state, in which, under the sceptre of Frederick Augustus, were united the departments of Posen, Kalisch, Plock, Warsaw, Lomza, Bromberg, Siedlce, Lublin, Radom and Cracow. The new Poland was simply a French sally port. From it issued the attack on Russia in 1812. After the retreat from Moscow the Poles were deceived in their last hopes. The death of Poniatowski at Leipzig had symbolic significance. Poland again disappeared after her brief reappearance as a servant of France.

No one thought at the Congress of Vienna of restoring the old Poland. Russia refused to tolerate a Polish buffer state, and for the fourth time Poland was sacrificed to the peace of Europe. This time the partition became part of the law of

Europe. Prussia renounced the additions to East Prussia, South Prussia and also the Lithuanian and Polish districts, and besides Thorn and Danzig kept only Posen, Pomerellia, West Prussia, Kulm and Ermeland. The acquisitions of Frederick the Great, now fully part of the Prussian state, were not discussed. The abandonment by Prussia of the Niemen line and the Vistula bend left the way free to Russia as far as the Prosna. Austria retained Galicia as a salient position on the eastern side of the Carpathians.

The Congress incorporated the central Polish area in the territory of the Tsar expressly by union with the crown and committed the settlement of its frontiers to the Tsar, who took the title of King of Poland but was not committed to a constitution. To avoid disputes over Cracow, the old capital was separated from Poland and made a neutral state under the protection of Austria, Prussia and Russia.

The Poles, however, refused to acquiesce in this burial of their kingdom. They dreamed of national resurrection and of shaking off the Russian yoke. When the emigrants found in Paris the capital from which the Polish struggle was so long led, when the imperialist policy of France was turned against Russia, the Polish question became a powerful instrument of European policy.

Thrice did the Poles rise in arms against Russia. The first rising was a continuation of the revolutionary movement of 1830 which expelled the Bourbons, and was serious enough to rank as a war of independence. The Poles appealed to London and Paris, but the cabinets feared the loosening of revolutionary forces and looked with misgiving on a movement which had split into factions after its first victories and, in spite of heroic resistance, was overwhelmed by the Russians. The second rising began as a democratic movement in 1846 which was suppressed and flared up again in 1848 as part of the general revolutionary outburst in Europe and for a moment filled the Polish exiles with hopes of resurrection. But it was defeated, the Congress settlement set aside and what was left of Poland disappeared from history. Austria took Cracow. The third insurrection broke out in 1861. All Russian Poland rose and fought for four years for freedom and life. Again Polish national pride created a revolt; again her political sense

failed her. The Russians suffered several reverses on the Vistula but no strategic victory was granted the disunited and badly armed insurgents. The Russians used the backwood peasantry, still under servitude to the nobility, for their own ends, and by releasing it from its obligations won it to their side. The insurrection ended in confusion and was punished by a reckless Russification of the Polish provinces. Thereby the Polish aristocratic tradition was completely destroyed, but not Polish nationalism.

When, forty years later, the first glimmers were seen of the Russian revolution, Polish and Russian democrats for the first time joined forces. On November 23, 1905, representatives of the zemstvos and the municipal councils in assembly at Moscow voted unanimously for full autonomy for Poland. The watchword "Kremlin and Praga," which in the days of pan-Slavism had found no echo in Poland, was taken up by the united peoples of Russia and Poland in their constitutional fight against absolutism. The Poles shared in this fight but did not lose their identity in it and, when the World War broke out, the resurrection of the Polish state again became the national aim.

The Poles of Prussia first entered the national movement when the Vienna Congress deceived their hopes, and the Polish question began to assume a dangerous form in Germany when the Kulturkampf united the Poles in the Reichstag in one religious and national group. After the Kulturkampf, they devoted their strength to the maintenance of the national movement. The Poles were now in fiercer opposition to Germanism than in Frederick's time.

Austria scarcely knew a Polish question. Czechs, Serbs and Slovenes caused her greater anxiety than the Poles who, after the war for German predominance in the Dual Monarchy, became so powerful as sometimes to feel themselves the real rulers. They ruled Galicia, where the Ruthenes were completely abandoned to them and after the reform of 1906 held one-sixth of the representation in the Reichsrat, participated in all the cabinets and ministerial appointments and had the ear of the emperor. Yet even here the national feeling did not disappear. Austria was regarded merely as a temporary residence until an independent Poland appeared.

The outbreak of the World War found Poland ready. The Poles were perhaps the only participants who wished above all for the destruction of Russia. That was contrary to the sympathy they had for Britain and France and made them more on the side of Germany and Austria than their historic attitude warranted. But they believed that a very different Austria would emerge from the conflict and that Germany would raise no vital objections if they sought to recreate the old Poland between the Bug and the Prosna.

So, fighting everywhere under alien flags, they found themselves soon courted by everybody. Russia promised a return to the pledge of Alexander I to maintain their national existence under the sceptre of the Romanoffs, Austria and Germany promised to free their brothers from the Russian yoke, Britain and France guaranteed Russia's promises. When Austria allowed the formation of Polish legions to fight Russia under their own flag the Polish question became an international one. When the flags, which bore the white eagle, flew on the snow-clad Carpathians a Polish state entered the purview of the Central Powers. Austrian statesmen had dealt with the question before the Germans found time to do so and had cleverly connected the dynastic interests of the Habsburgs with the national aims of Poland in order to prepare the way for a new Habsburg state in the east. For a time the Germans objected to the creation of an independent Polish kingdom in the Vistula basin but, after the heavy losses in 1916 at Verdun and on the Somme, which could no longer be made good, after the Russians had again driven the Austrians from the Bug to the Carpathians and Roumania was preparing to enter the war, they gave way and declared themselves ready to accept the idea of an independent state, although they realised that the Poles would never be content with a state which was only Russian Poland and that their dream was the resurrection of Jagellon's empire. The search of the army for recruits was vain. Polish exiles in Paris formed a revolutionary government and the creation of a Polish army which became an Allied army, showed the Germans that the Poles would not leave the German frontier as it was.

The announcement of the creation of a Polish kingdom caused immense loss to the Central Powers. It made vain all

endeavours to detach Russia from the *Entente* and every attempt of Russia's to make a separate peace. The Tsar and the Russian Liberals, again inflamed with the pan-Slav ideal, adhered the more firmly to the Western Powers. Nicolas II summoned the lads of eighteen to the army and promised the Poles that they would all be united under his sceptre and given autonomy. That was the Russian answer to the German proclamation of the kingdom of Poland.

Shortly after a memorandum was sent to the Petrograd Cabinet by France and England which stiffened the back of the Russian Government. It was the result of a conference held in Paris on November 16th and expressed the joy of the Western Powers that the Imperial Government had characterised the German proclamation as a violation of international law and had repeated its resolve to give autonomy to all the Poles. The Western Powers declared their adhesion to this policy and declared that the union of all the Poles in a national state under the sceptre of the Tsar was a fundamental base of the future equilibrium of Europe.

Germany now realised the extent of her Polish illusions. The Polish question still played a fantastic part in the schemes of Austrian statesmen and the confused dreams of Francis Joseph's successor, but in Berlin people characterised the hopes set on Poland and the policy directed towards their realisation as " a pile of junk."

When the war ended the pile had so increased, thanks to German policy, that the Polish question was nearly buried under it. The frontiers of Germany and Austria were in complete dissolution. The Western Powers saw themselves in a position not merely to fulfil their pledges but to escape the responsibility they had assumed in their dealings with Russia in 1916.

Not under the sceptre of the Tsar, but in complete independence did the Poles proceed to the erection of a new state which saw itself called upon to play a part in Europe before its frontiers were fixed. The rise of Bolshevism demanded the erection of a strong eastern barrier. As Wilson and Britain had agreed to disarm Germany in order to give France " security " on the Rhine, the only solution was to entrust this task to Poland. But that was not all. Poland was summoned

not merely to stem the Bolshevik flood but required to watch Germany. She was thus forced to adopt a policy of two fronts which fitted neither her geographical position nor her interests.

No single state depends so much on the Versailles settlement as Poland. Every change threatens her with grave dangers and as no settlement is immutable Poland has more to fear than to hope for. The Polish nation expressly recognised its dependence. On June 4, 1919, all the Polish parties except the Socialists addressed a memorial to the National Committee, which said: "It is the unshakeable will and the dearest wish of the Polish nation that the close union into which during the war Poland entered with the Allied States should be maintained and subsist for all time" and consequently that the Polish nation should be "master of a sea coast of its own and of the old Polish port of Danzig" in order as a base of the new order of things to separate Germany permanently from the east. Thus Poland enters the European system not as a unifying, but as a disintegrating, force and as of old seeks to unite in a great empire not only the Poles of the Vistula and the Bug but the scattered Polish elements in Lithuania, White and Red Russia, Silesia and Pomerellia.

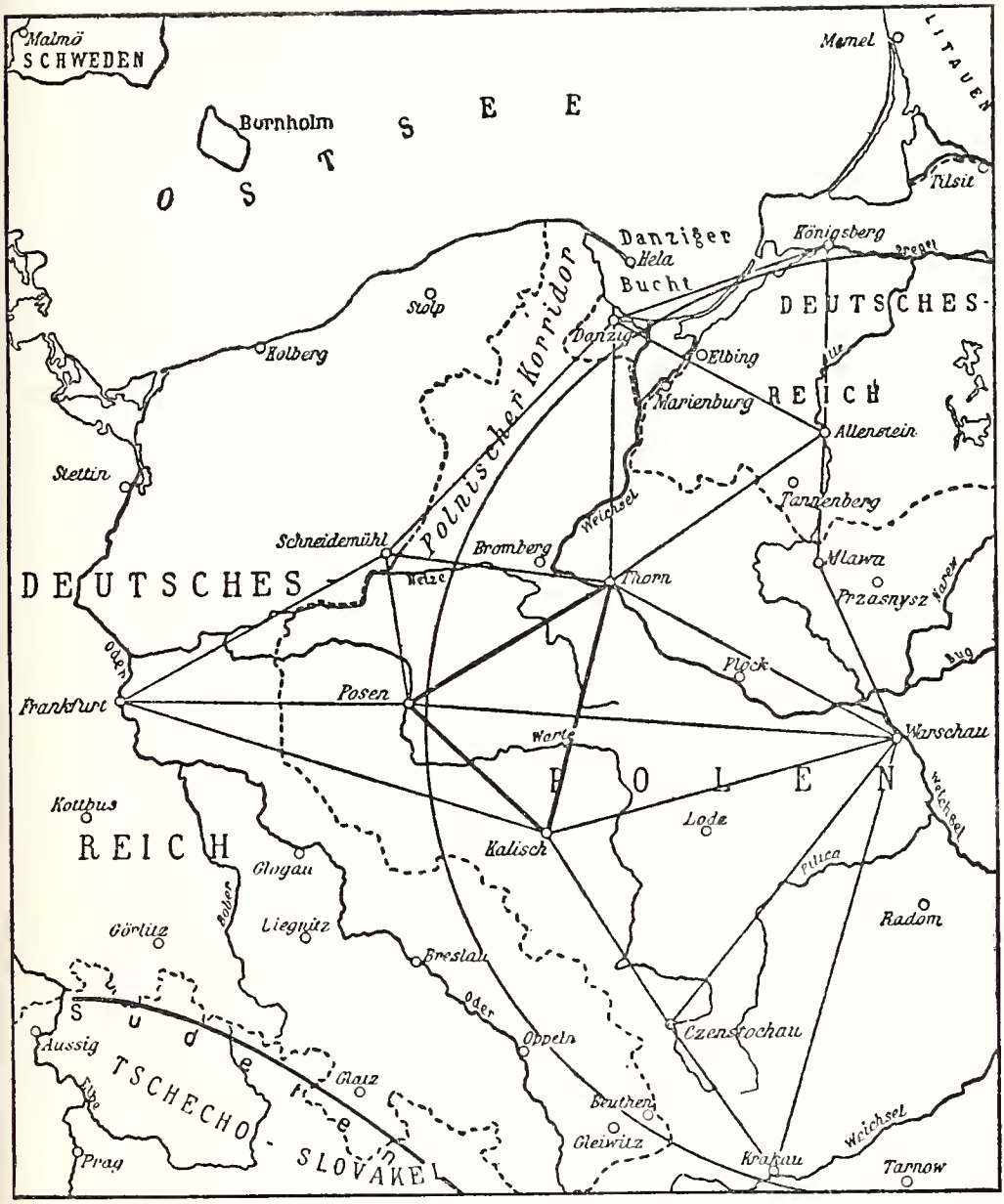
The Versailles settlement gave Poland far more than the laws of geography warranted and even violated them in creating the Polish corridor from Thorn to the sea, but even so it did not satisfy the demands of the memorialists. The Versailles dictators could not give Danzig to Poland since Britain refused to allow a Franco-Polish fortress to be erected on the Baltic. But the city was not saved for Germany thereby. It was condemned to a hybrid existence by being removed from Germany and surrendered as a "free state" to Polish domination which cannot really be restrained by the League of Nations. From this position Danzig cannot escape and remains suspended between life and death as long as the Polish corridor ends at her walls. The Polish corridor has far more separative force than the Silesian corridor of Napoleon, since it places in Polish hands roads, railways and river in an area 80 kilometres wide and separates East Prussia completely from the main German mass. In taking this way of giving to Poland an outlet to the sea the Versailles dictators

ran counter not only to political wisdom but to the true interests of Poland.

The recreation of Poland is justified only if the new state obeys geographical law, builds up its power in the Vistula basin and the highlands of Podolia and again takes up its historic rôle in the struggle for territory between the Eurasian East and old Europe in union with Germany. Old Poland fell not because the Germans coveted Polish territory, but because Poland was no longer able to halt the Russian advance.

When the Western Powers resolved to annul the partitions and to give the Polish question their own solution, they did not deal with it for the sake of Poland or for love of the doctrines of Wilson, but as part of their own imperialist policies. Britain held Russia in check by placing the new Poland on the Russian Dniester flank and sought here security against the increasing pressure on India. France held Germany in check by thrusting Poland deep into the Prussian flank and so binding Poland firmly to the west. The continental imperialism of France and the world imperialism of Britain worked together to make use of Poland at the cost of placing the new state on the horns of a terrible dilemma. Poland must pursue a policy of two fronts which by her own will she pursued to her cost in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. She cannot escape from the position in which she is placed by its dependence on assistance from her allies. She vainly seeks to strengthen herself by denying the history of two centuries and in remembrance of the XVIIth century, seeking to create a Polish empire of 400,000 square kilometres in which dwell 28,000,000 people of which no fewer than 9,000,000 are not of Polish race. Vilna, promised to Lithuania, she acquired by force; she raised rebellion in Upper Silesia in order to anticipate a partition which, against all economic sense, was recognised at Versailles and by which alone she took to herself 274,000 Germans; she fought with the Czechs for Teschen and she has thrust its frontiers deep into Russian territory. This Polish empire is neither a geographical, an economic nor a national unity, nor has it found a steady centre of gravity.

Its dependence on the Western Powers was soon revealed. When the Red armies in 1920 advanced over the Polish frontiers, Poland appealed to Britain, France and Italy for help,



POLAND'S OFFENSIVE FLANK AGAINST GERMANY.

Britain counselled, but did not act; France acted. The British saw no vital interests of theirs endangered; the French saw the encirclement of Germany threatened in the east. France did not leave her protégé in jeopardy, for otherwise the chain round Germany would have been loosened. She acted not for Poland's sake. With French munitions and under French generals the Poles fought in a manner worthy of their old fame as warriors and drove the enemy from the gates of Warsaw. But this is but an episode. The Russian wave is stemmed, not broken. The flood will sweep on again and when it does so Poland, concentrated against Germany, will seek in vain to stem it. The future of Poland is bound up with an understanding with Germany and this means a renunciation of the frontier line at the Oder and the Vistula mouth. As Poland cannot take the offensive in the east and Germany will not let herself be lured into an alliance against Russia, Poland is compelled to make concessions on all sides.

It could not be otherwise. Poland on the map is a large irregular quadrilateral which lies in the great European plain without any obvious frontier line. To the east she looks over marsh and steppe to endless distance, the roads and railways from which run to Warsaw as centre. In the west the frontiers are purely arbitrary. Poland saw herself furnished with rich mineral wealth when she secured a part of Upper Silesia and received an outlet to the sea, but the organism of the upper Silesian industrial area was dangerously injured and the Polish corridor makes demands on the Polish state which cannot be met.

The strategic triangle Thorn–Posen–Kalisch is the Polish zone of concentration for an attack. Frankfurt on the Oder has become the bridgehead of Berlin and the German capital lies only 160 kilometres away from the Polish outposts. But the strategic position of Poland is not so favourable as it seems. East Prussia, despite its separation from the German mass, forms a bulwark of great natural strength in Poland's west flank and the threatening triangle lacks support. The concentration of the Polish armies between the Warthe and the Vistula would expose to a Russian attack the whole eastern front from the Dvina to the Dniester.

The valley of the Vistula in which Poland has built up the

new state has never been successfully defended against concentric attack. So long as the Piasts and the Jagellons were powerful enough to carry the war across the frontiers and Poland was armed against the east, the kingdom was secure from attack. But when anarchy overtook the republic of the nobles all the frontiers lay open. The decisive battles in Polish history have always been fought at the gates of Warsaw.

As a result of her present frontiers, Poland will be kept perpetually uneasy and be ever more deeply involved in the French system of alliances if she is unwilling to make concessions to win freedom from anxiety. Her social organisation has been changed but she is not in a state to organise herself economically. She maintains her historic policy of dissipating her efforts and is in opposition to all her neighbours. Sooner or later she will be forced to concentrate her strength on interior lines. The sooner this occurs the surer will she maintain herself within less extensive frontiers than at present.

The dual rôle of a Power standing armed against and between Russia and Germany which Poland to-day plays so imperially, demands of her a huge military effort. She maintains an army of 400,000 men to guard her position and 38 per cent. of her revenue is spent on armaments. She uses up all her strength in this effort to be prepared. She suffers by reason of the incompatibility of the task undertaken on the Dnieper with that undertaken on the Warthe and the obligation required of her and assumed by her on the Baltic in German territory.

The Polish republic to-day appears as the barrier against the Communist flood, but to-morrow it may be faced with a Russia organised on other lines which will no longer be cut off from Europe because of revolutionary aims. If this evolution takes place, Poland's mandate falls to the ground, and there remains only her own strength and client-relationship with France. There is no future for her, judging by present conditions and past history, unless she frees herself from this dual rôle and her imperialist policy. The area which the Poles are able to hold is much smaller than the geographical area now held by them and on which they move so uneasily.

Germany can no more dispense with the Oder region and the Lower Vistula than with the Rhine region, and Poland's position is the stronger, the more it is supported by Germany. It is not the client-relationship with France that will avail her but German friendship and Russian tolerance. Only when Poland reaches a friendly understanding with Germany on the western frontiers and can defend her eastern frontier against Russia by her own strength will she secure a clear and permanent place on the map of Europe.

The Franco-Polish alliance which is to-day the basis of Polish policy affords Poland no security, since it rests on the joint frontal position which France and Poland maintain against Germany. France defends the Polish corridor as a French military highway.

Poland is placed in the same position as Napoleon placed the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. The continuity of French policy is maintained, the dependence of Poland sealed. The wording of the Franco-Polish treaty should not deceive us on this point. The decisive third article lays it down that the two Governments will co-operate to defend their territory and protect their legitimate interests if both, or either, be attacked without provocation. The alliance thus appears a defensive one, but, as such, it defends the Versailles frontier settlement which Article X of the League Covenant secures in any case. As a pact has been made whereby Germany places a guarantee of the Versailles frontiers in the hands of Britain and France and as Germany has entered the League of Nations and an arbitration treaty forbids the appeal to arms, Poland seems trebly secured. But this triple arrangement does not imply triple security; it merely reveals the brittleness of the conditions established by the Peace Conference.

What would be the attitude of Britain and France if Poland were to be exposed to the risk of war in spite of all precautions or were actually involved in war? Will the ceremonial procedure of the League of Nations, which as a juridical body counts on delays of which strategy knows nothing, be set in motion, while the French Republic, not as League mandatory, but fulfilling her obligations as an allied Power sets her armies in motion and based on the Rhine wins the gates of the Eger and the Saale in order, according to circumstances, to march

on the Saxon glacis with her front to the north or into Moravia with her front to the east in front of the central fortress of Bohemia ?

That is a pregnant question for Europe which eludes answer. But one thing is certain. The moment the flames of war seize on the east, Poland will fight not for the Versailles frontier but for her life. Once before she succumbed because geo-politically the task she undertook was wrongly conceived.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALTIC STATES

The girdle of states which lay at peace for nearly a century around the Baltic has broken in pieces. Denmark has advanced to Flensburg and where Russia and Germany had arranged the map *à deux* to-day Poland, Danzig, East Prussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia, Russia and Finland jostle one another in the same area. Danzig and East Prussia have been separated from Germany ; Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and Finland from Russia.

The history of the Baltic region between Cape Hela and the mouth of the Tornea to the south and east of the Gulf of Bothnia is extremely chequered. All the states living in the Baltic area have fought on this coast and great nations from the interior of the Continent have ruled it. The origin of these states was as different as their power to make history. Maritime and continental ambitions met in conflict here where Germans, Slavs and Finns struggled for mastery and as yet there is no issue to the latest renewal of the conflict.

The Poles who to-day play the chief part on the Baltic stage first emerged from their inland home to set foot on the coast when, about the IXth century, they began to form a state in the now settled Slav area. Their ambition was not realised by their own strength. Their war for Danzig, East Prussia, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia was waged by the German sword and the German plough.

After the withdrawal of the Germans before the end of the 1st millennium A.D. Danzig appears as a Slav settlement and about 1260 became the capital of the Slav duchy of Pomerellia, but in the XIIth century it was filled with Germans and in 1310, after the extinction of the ducal house, came into the possession of the Teutonic Order. As a member of the Hansa, Danzig soon reached the front rank of German merchant cities. Its ships fought in the Hansa's war under its own flags ; its constitution was German ; its civic life was one of the proudest and most brilliant achievements of German

colonisation. When after the conversion of Lithuania to Christianity and the conclusion of the Polono-Lithuanian military alliance the power of the Teutonic Order was broken Danzig, robbed of its privileged position, became part of West Prussia. The Peace of Thorn surrendered city and district to the Polish king. But Danzig was too powerful to be merged in the Polish state. The Poles left it its privileges and a domain of some 950 square kilometres. It preserved its Germanism, increased its wealth, kept proudly apart from Polish affairs, accepted the Reform and defended the new faith in 1577 against Stephan Báthory, who besieged its citadel in vain. The refusal to become Polonised was the keynote of its policy.

Danzig's star began to wane in the XVIIth century. It suffered as a result of the Polono-Swedish wars, lost its inland trade, was depopulated by plague, and in the XVIIIth century was involved in the Polish disaster. It sided with Leszczynski and a Russian army appeared at its gates, captured it after a difficult siege and forced it to pay tribute. The first partition left it alone as a Free City but deprived it of its territory and its harbour and condemned it to extinction. From this fate it was saved by the treaty of 1793, which made it Prussian. Napoleon made it a Free State again by the Peace of Tilsit, restored to it its historic territory and placed it under the protection of France, Saxony and Prussia, but also made it France's chief military centre in the east and submitted it to the continental blockade. Its constitution spoke of freedom and independence, but France ruled. When the Grand Army retreated from Russia, French and Polish units of the Xth corps flung themselves into Danzig which Rapp held for a year against Prussians and Russians. It took a generation before Danzig recovered from its experience, and it first attained prosperity again as a Prussian city in the German empire. By the Versailles settlement it was removed from Germany and Prussia and again made a Free City under the protection of the League of Nations, but burdened by the services it must render to Poland and deprived of all freedom of movement. Article 104 of the Peace Treaty gives the Poles control of the customs and of railway and postal traffic between Poland and the port and leaves the conduct of foreign affairs in Polish hands. These provisions deprive it

of liberty. Poland piles up her munitions on the Westerplatte, places Polish guards over them and includes the port area in her postal system. The League of Nations deals only in weak compromises. The fact is that the right of self-determination of the 240,000 Germans who live on both banks of the Vistula between Dirschau and the sea has completely disappeared.

This solution of the Danzig problem represents a compromise between France and Britain. Poland will not cease to misinterpret and to threaten the Danzig constitution and the treaty settlement in order to have fully in her power the most important strategic point on the southern coast of the Baltic. But that will not be easy, for if Danzig became part of Poland the maritime position is changed to the disadvantage of all the surrounding states and would not even leave Britain uninterested. Only the return of Danzig to Germany will create the peace which Danzig lacks in common with all the Baltic states. But the problem of Danzig is inseparable from that of the Polish corridor and the separation of East Prussia from Germany, and so any attempt to free the city from its dubious position is part of the general question of the German-Polish frontiers.

East Prussia occupies to-day so absurd a position that it can be explained only by the strategic ideas which Europe acquired during the war and which became laws in the Peace settlement. The province was sacrificed to the rebirth of Poland. The Polish return to the mouth of the Vistula has again given East Prussia that insular position from which it escaped a century and a half ago. It is now cut off from Germany by the Polish corridor, has been deprived of the corner position of Thorn and the Memel coast and serves as a refuge for 2,000,000 Germans stranded in the Polish-Lithuanian ocean. Poland desired even more, but failed to get it. The treaty provided that the inhabitants of the area Lyck–Johannisburg–Neidenburg – Marienwerder – Marienburg – Rosenburg–Osterode–Allenstein–Rössel–Lötzen–Lyck should declare by plebiscite whether they wished to belong to Poland or Germany. The manœuvre failed, but if it had succeeded Poland would have secured the strategic foreground of the Pregel district and have simply eradicated East Prussia. Poland, indeed, would not have secured peace thereby, since the Lithuanians would have

been bound to resist, for they would be completely dominated if East Prussia became Polish.

Crossing the Memel we reach the geographical area that extends from that river to the Narva and is to-day occupied by Lithuania, Esthonia and Latvia. Letts and Esths form Baltic coastal states; Lithuania, despite the wedge she has driven to the coast, is an inland state. The Baltic has never been culturally and geographically important to her people as it has to the Esths and Letts, to whom it brought German culture. The states of Esthonia and Latvia occupy the old districts of Livonia and Kurland, named after long vanished Finnish tribes. Both are states without history. The history of the area is the history of the Teutonic Order and of the German settlers who built proud cities and strong castles. The descendants of the old barons, burghers and peasants remained in power till Russification, Red massacres and the rise of the depressed Letts and Esths broke them as the ruling class.

What is now Esthonia was conquered by the Danes and Germans in the XIVth century. The Danes occupied the coast as a maritime outpost till the lion-banner yielded the seas to the Hansa. To-day the Danish leopard appears in the arms of historyless Esthonia. North Esthonia was under the Teutonic Order for more than two centuries and was covered with a thick net of German settlements. The Swedes held it thereafter till disaster overtook Charles XII and then Russia took it. Livonia, the southern part of the new state, fell to Poland in 1561, was captured by Gustavus Adolphus in 1629, and in 1710 shared the fate of the northern part in the empire of Peter the Great.

The history of Latvia is the history of Kurland. Kurland was occupied by the Teutonic Order in the XIIIth century and remained in their possession until the Poles acquired suzerainty over it in the middle of the XVIth century. Then the Order's Master, Gotthard Kettler, received it as a feudal possession, called himself its duke and left the duchy to his sons. His grandson, Jacob Kettler, in 1658 was conquered by the Swedes but by the Peace of Oliva preserved his ducal status. He was a man of great conceptions and opened out to his duchy prospects of maritime conquests, for he equipped a fleet and sent his ships from Windau to Guinea. But this was but a

passing gleam. Russia in 1737 swept away the old German foundation. The Tsarina Anna, who, as Grand-duchess, had married Duke Frederick William, who died young, handed the duchy over after the extinction of the Kettler house to her favourite, Biron. The Polish king, Augustus III, in vain tried to win back Poland's old fief by persuading the estates to elect his son Charles as duke. Catherine II chased the Saxon from the land and restored Biron. When Biron's son Peter, in 1795, renounced a shadow throne, Kurland was incorporated in Russia. Throughout this history there is no sign of any impulse to freedom and sovereignty on the part of the native population.

Only to the inland people of Lithuania was strength given to make themselves a Power and settle their own destiny. The beginning of their history dates from Mindovas, who sought to bring under his sovereignty the petty chiefs who in the XIIIth century lived between the Masurian lakes and the West Russian hills on the banks of the Niemen and the Wilija. In the XIVth century Lithuania attained unity. When her prince, Gendimin, was at the height of his power he described himself with design as " King of the Lithuanians and many Russians." He conquered White Russia, made Vilna his capital, invaded Volhynia, fought with Russians, Poles and Tartars, made himself a terror to neighbouring states by the savage suddenness of his cavalry raids. The Russian princes of the Dnieper sent him tribute and the Poles left thousands of prisoners in his hands. When Gendimin's daughter Anna Aldona gave her hand to Casimir the Great and brought him as a wedding gift all the Polish captives, a Lithuano-Slav empire was revealed as possible and it was established by Gendimin's grandson Vitold.

This cunning, treacherous Lithuano-Slav harboured great designs. His conceptions were pan-Slav and not without success did he seek to give form to them by sending his nephew Korybut to the Czechs when the Hussite drums were sounding throughout the east. But Lithuania's greatness was only for Vitold's lifetime. At his death Lithuania was absorbed by its eastern and western neighbours. It became a part of Poland, shared Poland's greatness, decline and fall, and was devoured by Russia.

Lithuania entered history again at the Peace of Brest-

Litovsk. The Lithuano-Slavs did not hold by Poland, but on February 16, 1918, sought to recreate a free and independent state under cover of the German victories. Not even after the war were they reconciled to Poland but prepared to make trial of the right of self-determination in a geographical position and under geo-political conditions that leave Lithuania no future. With difficulty did they defend themselves against the Bolsheviks, they lost their historic capital, Vilna, to the Poles, and if they remain independent as they are, are condemned to be an agricultural, backward inland state, in spite of their advance to Memel which gave them the Baltic coast from Polangen to the Kurisches Haff. They have gone back over five centuries to connect their state with Gendimin's empire, but they cannot possibly reconstruct it. They fear Russian support, they dread Poland's expansionist policy, they are hostile to Germany, are allied to Latvia and Esthonia only because of the common sense of insecurity, geographically and politically. Their advance to Memel appears imposed on them rather by a desire to seek connection with the outer world than any desire for empire. They seek help from Britain, but they risk becoming again a piece on the Russian chessboard.

France has not been able to extend her imperialist system to Finland, Esthonia, Latvia or Lithuania. Maritime coastal states do not incline to the leading land Power but to the leading maritime Power. France committed a mistake when she made easy the Lithuanian invasion of the Memelland and gave the French governor who ruled in the name of the Allies secret instructions not to oppose the invaders. The establishment of the Lithuanians on the Baltic did not make Lithuania a maritime state, but it detached her from France and increased British influence in the Baltic area.

The struggle for the Baltic lands is by no means finished. The history of the Teutonic Order revealed the geo-political aim which every conqueror of the Baltic coast must set himself to realise. The area which stretches north-eastwards from the lower Oder across the Vistula, the Niemen, the Dvina and the Narva to the Neva is a natural unity which tends to penetrate deeper and deeper into the Continent.

When the heathen Prussians and Lithuanians defended themselves so well in the XIIIth century from the Poles.

Bishop Christian of Oliva and Duke Conrad of Masovia were compelled to summon the Teutonic Order to their aid. Germanism thus returned again to the Baltic cradleland whence it had come in the days of the great migrations. The Order won West and East Prussia, Kurland and Livonia for Germanism and western culture.

Had it been possible for the Order to free itself sooner from its theocratic chains and to secularise its domains before the ground was taken from under its feet by the conversion of Vitold to Christianity, it might have been able to carry its creation from mediæval into modern times and add all the Baltic lands to the German empire. It conquered West and East Prussia, occupied Pomerellia and held it against the Polish kings Vladislas Lokietek and Casimir the Great, created a land-bridge from the East Prussian hills to the Oder and, in exchange, gave up the districts already captured in the Vistula basin south of Thorn. When it was sufficiently protected on flank and rear, it turned to the east, incorporated the Brothers of Sword in Kurland and Livonia, brought in German colonists, built castle after castle, town after town and then proceeded to a concentric attack on the Lithuanians. It took fifty-three years to conquer the Prussians and the struggle with Gendimin's people lasted a century and a half. No longer, however, did it fight as a crusading army but for the preservation and extension of its political power. It fought with an extraordinary appreciation of the geo-political conditions which demanded the union of Livonia and Kurland with the Order's Prussian-Pomerellian domain and the linking of West Prussia to the Mark of Brandenburg. It fought for Samogitia, which is a Lithuanian "Netherland" stretching from the Dubissa to the Baltic, and to win at any cost the line Rossieny–Polangen. Not Memel, but Polangen, is the port of historical Lithuania. Memel was founded in 1253 under the walls of a fortress founded by the Order, settled by Low Germans, made a member of the Hansa and in 1328 came into the possession of the Teutonic Order. From its origin it was a German city and in 1925 the Memelland showed its German character at the first election held under Lithuanian rule by giving the German parties 62,500 votes and only 5,500 to the Lithuanian.

The struggle for Samogitia exhausted the Order's strength.

It was acquired in 1404 after the Lithuanians had renounced heathenism, but was acquired too late. When, shortly after, the Order quarrelled with Jagello over the Netze fortress of Driesen and the Polish king, relying on Vitold's help, accepted the challenge, the Teutonic Order was faced with a war with the united Lithuano-Slavic Power. It did not lose the campaign because the flower of its chivalry fell at Tannenberg, but because it was no longer able to recover from such a defeat. Thanks to the heroic defence of Marienburg it saved its original possessions, and had only to surrender Samogitia to Jagello, but the Poles represented Tannenberg as a victory over Germanism and as such they still represent it.

Henry of Plauen, the defender of Marienburg, sought in vain to identify the Order more closely with the country. It owes its awakening to his summoning of a national assembly composed of representatives of the Prussian nobility and of the towns. In 1440 its discontented subjects created a Prussian league and broke into open rebellion, which gave the Poles the chance to seize the Prussian land. The Order struggled on for another thirteen years before it yielded to the Poles and in 1466 the Peace of Thorn consecrated the Order's surrender. That peace was appealed to by Poland in 1918 as a pillar of her case.

The fall of the Order needs no further description. It is enough to state that the election of the Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg-Anspach to the Grand-mastership was a decisive moment for Germanism. When he turned the states of the Order in 1525 into a secular duchy, which after the extinction of the Frankish line passed to the Hohenzollern, the Fates began to spin a new web.

The union of the Baltic and Brandenburg lands which the Order had in vain striven to bring about by advancing from east to west was now attempted in the opposite direction. In 1569 the first great Chancellor of the Hohenzollerns, Lampert Distelmeyer, secured for the Grand Duke Joachim a share in the fief of the Duchy of Prussia. A century later the Grand Duke shook off Polish suzerainty and another century later Frederick the Great built the land-bridge from the Oder to the Vistula and made East and West Prussia a strong German bulwark against Russia, which since the XVth century had made a westward advance of 500 kilometres, and in 1795

marched on the Niemen and the Bug, a distance of 1,000 kilometres from Moscow.

The union of the Baltic lands in one land was not attained, but German culture spread to the Narva. The Order of the Brothers of the Sword, which had been taken over in the XIIIth century by the Teutonic Order, had conquered Esthonia and Livonia and had even reached Ingermanland, but had not the strength to throw the Russians back over the Valdai hills. When it was defeated on the ice of the frozen Lake Peipus by the Grand Duke Alexander Nevsky of Novgorod the time had come to be less ambitious. The Order held its ground for three centuries more and in 1502 by the great victory on the Smolina stayed the Russian advance, but it fought a forlorn hope on the extreme flank of Germanism.

Thanks to the rivalry of Russia and Poland the Order maintained itself for fifty years between the two Powers and held the line Dorpat–Riga–Mitau–Libau against all attacks until it was caught in the net of the treaty system which necessity had forced it to join. When the Order was attacked by Moscow because it had concluded an alliance with Poland, although at Poswol in 1557 it had promised the Russians to enter into no engagements with the Poles, it was defeated after a heroic resistance. Its kingdom fell in pieces. Esthonia was acquired by Sweden and the Livonian province of the Order became the Duchy of Kurland, which Kettler kept for his descendants under Polish suzerainty till Russia shattered the Polish republic and Biron's son Peter laid the heritage of Kettler as a gift at the feet of the aged Catherine II.

The long struggle on the Baltic was one between the tendency to organise the area from the maritime point of view and the tendency to organise it from the continental point of view. That struggle is not over. Lithuania, to-day a state of 2,295,000 inhabitants, Latvia with 1,600,000, and Esthonia with 1,110,000, are not masters of their future, even if united.

The same applies to Finland, the fourth state which freed itself from Russia and summoned a national state to life on an ethnic basis. But the Finn looks back on a sure tradition and inhabits a definitely bounded area. Finland lies outside the Polish sphere on the Scandinavian east glacis between Russia and Sweden. When the Finns won the plateau of the thou-

sand lakes, the land seemed a natural refuge from the Slav advance. They supplanted a Scandinavian people and fixed themselves firmly between the Ladoga lake and the Tornea, but soon had to face an offensive return of the Scandinavians. When St. Eric, Sweden's first great king, crossed the land-bridge of the Aaland Islands (c. 1250), conquered South Finland and set up the Cross at Abo, Finland's fate thenceforward depended on Scandinavia. At the beginning of the XIIIth century the Swedes had reached the narrow stretch of land between Lake Ladoga and the Gulf of Finland. On the Ladoga line they encountered the Russians. Finland became a buffer state and also a military highway and had to decide for union either with Slavism or Germanism. In the XIVth century the decision went in favour of Germanism. The gifted race of the Finns became an important part of the Swedish nation and rose higher in culture.

When the Muscovites under Ivan III crossed the Netze in 1473 to conquer Finland, the Finns were ready to defend themselves. The Russians laid waste with impunity the lands of the Carelians and Tavastians, but could not break the Finnish resistance. This first great encounter between Finland and Muscovy decided the attitude of Finland to Russia until to-day; Finland never abandoned her frontal position against the east and defended it in long wars. In 1809 the Russians conquered the country, but not the people. Alexander I swore to uphold the Finnish Constitution and called himself Grand Duke of Finland. A century later nothing was left of that constitution. The Finns fought desperately against Russification and under the pressure of Russian tyranny they turned away from Sweden and fell back on the resources of their own nation, finding there strength to resist until the World War rescued them. When the Finns declared war on communist Russia and the Bolshevist section of their own people, revolutionary Russia was still in arms on the Dvina and in Galicia. The Russian Government felt the threat to the left flank and strong Red forces crossed the Neva to Viborg in order to march on Helsingfors. Desperately the Finnish volunteers sought to save Tavasteland. It was then that Germany felt called on to save the Baltic lands, although they were definitely lost to her. The German advance in February

1918 to free Latvia, Esthonia and Finland from the Russians responded to the strategic need of creating a state of security in the east before commencing the last great attack in the west, but it has a world-historical importance. The framers of the Versailles settlement re-organised the whole eastern area from the rough sketch made by the Germans.

In this organisation Finland has an important position. The Finns are less involved in the Russian problem than the Letts and Esths; they inhabit a sharply-defined natural area which lies outside the line of advance laid down by Peter the Great and serves even as maritime flank protection to it, but it lost its strategic importance when Russia under Bolshevism withdrew from Petrograd to Moscow, and its future is no longer directly dependent on events in Russia. Only if Russia marches against the west and the centre of gravity is again removed from the Moskwa and the Don to the Dvina and the Vistula, will the Finn be summoned to defend his national existence. Then he will have to look around for an ally who will protect Finland and its 9,200,000 inhabitants from being absorbed by Russia. A Baltic league and a Baltic-Polish alliance is not enough.

Finland has no illusions on the subject. She realises that even to-day she fights a defensive battle because she does not fully possess strategic freedom of action. She is pressed back from Lake Onega and the White Sea and the Russians on the Kola peninsula and Murman coasts strike deeply into her north-east flank. The eastern frontiers lack their natural protection. By the Peace of Dorpat of October 14, 1920, Finland lost the Swir glacis which lies in the Olonetz region and commands the entrance to Finland between Lakes Ladoga and Onega. On the coast of the Arctic Sea, she possesses only a small section between the Norwegian frontier and the Murman coast which cannot be fortified or serve as base for a fleet. She is also obliged to dismantle the fortifications on her south coast in front of Kronstadt and to neutralise the islands of the Gulf of Finland. As Russia sees the Murman railway safe and also the Kronstadt roadstead and the sea passage along the Finnish coast, it is not difficult for her to recognise Finland's independence, especially when Finland not only refuses union with Sweden but maintains possession of the Aaland Islands against Swedish claims.

When she quarrelled with Sweden over their possession, a change of front was made for the first time in her history. The quarrel was the result of the feeling that she was an individual state and so, remembering her most ancient history, she felt bound to demand possession of the group. The conflict was one for the flying bridge which it forms between the Swedish and the Finnish coasts, at the same time forming a barrier and a central flank position at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia. Sweden in vain pleaded her historic and ethnic rights, appealed equally in vain to the right of self-determination; Finland, supported by Britain and France, received the islands as a permanent possession.

Sweden by this decision was not deprived of anything which she had possessed during the XIXth century and in independent Finland she has secured a bulwark against Russia, but she missed the great opportunity to bring inside her sway the maritime flank position in the eastern Baltic basin, which would have meant a change in the Baltic balance of power and has allowed a danger zone to be created on the Gulf of Finland. If in this connection we ask where Finland can seek support should a strong Russia take up again the march to the west in order to recover her old frontiers, we touch on one of the most difficult problems which the settlement has produced. It weighs not only on Finland but on the whole belt of states in the east from Finland to Roumania.

Faced with this danger, Poland and Roumania took the road to Paris. France welcomed them with open arms as her clients in order to win in them armed guards over Germany and Hungary and to support her imperialist system from the Baltic to the Black Sea on a front looking east and west composed of federated states. Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and Finland turned to Britain and are supported by her as the outposts of her Eurasian policy. The continental and maritime states bordering on Russia are thus allied to Powers far to the west. They were all, even Poland, which poses as a Great Power, placed on the map of Europe by the Versailles dictators not for their own sakes or in obedience to the right of self-determination, but to serve as buffer states. They are thus more exposed to changes in circumstances and forces than independent compact states.

CHAPTER IX

SWEDEN, DENMARK AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE BALTIC

NORTHERN Europe, which began to sink into unimportance from the signing of the Treaties of Oliva and Nystadt, and the Baltic, which seemed to be freed from European conflicts when Russia secured Finland and Germany Schleswig-Holstein, have been no less disturbed by the Versailles settlement than the Mediterranean world and the centre of the Continent. There is no controversy on the courses set before the three northern nations, Sweden, Norway and Denmark which were not involved in the World War. Since their entry into history till the end of the XVIIIth century, they are perfectly clear and can be easily described in order to show their connection with the present order of things.

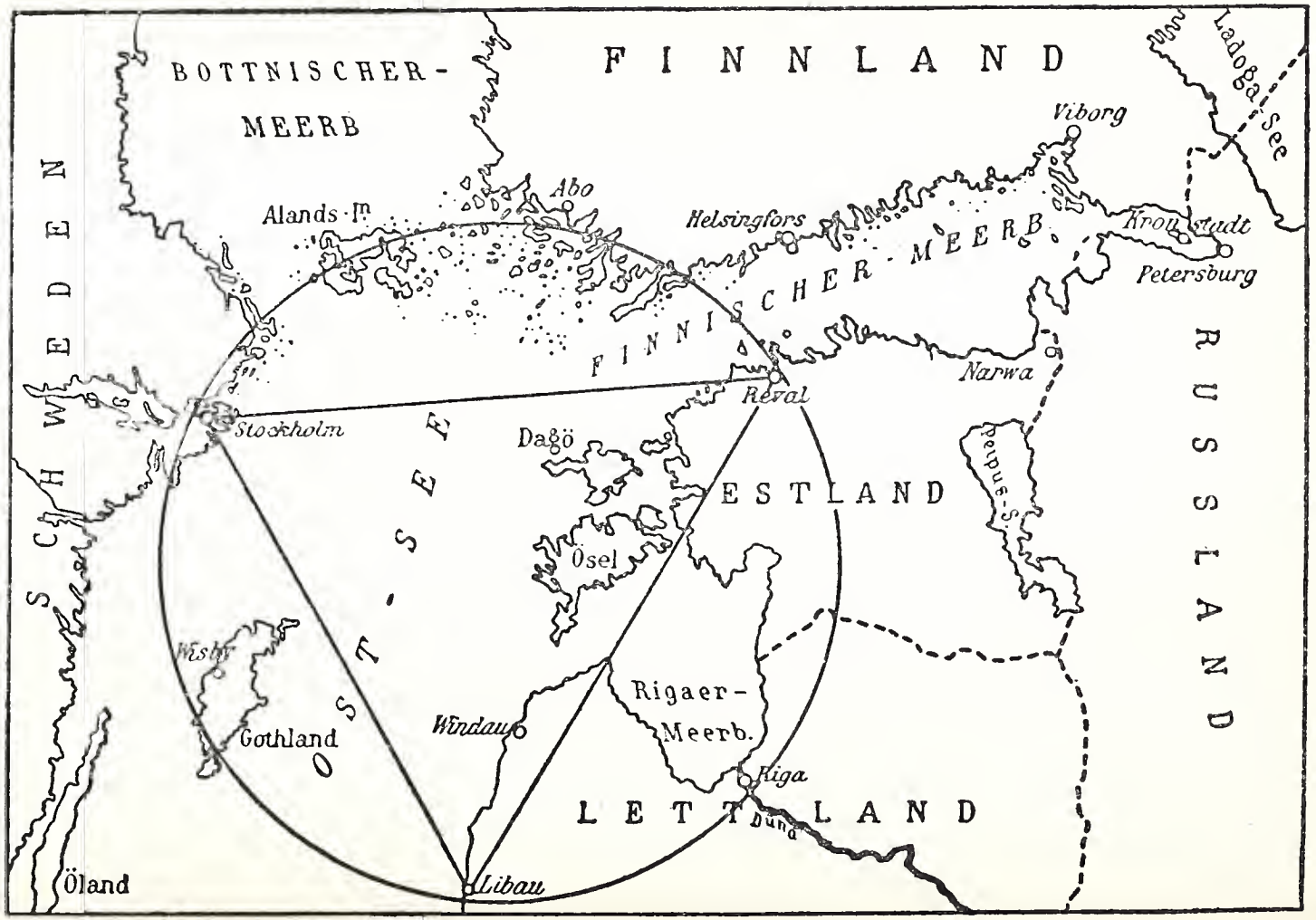
Often united, often in conflict, Danes and Swedes fill the Scandinavian world completely and their surplus population benefits all the coasts of Europe. The frontiers of Scandinavia were entered in the book of history at the end of the Xth century after Sweden had conquered Finland and the Danes Jutland as the natural buttresses of Scandinavia. The Swedes embarked on a continental policy of expansion, the Danes acquired maritime supremacy and reached power sooner than the Swedes, who had to shake off Danish authority ere they in turn gained supremacy.

Sweden has a heroic history. We see the kings of her first historical dynasty conquer Finland, we see the Vasas ascend the throne and shake off the Danish supremacy ; we see Gustavus Adolphus fighting in Poland and Germany, settle the fate of the religious and political development of the west and, after raising Sweden to be a Great Power, die a hero's death. Charles X fought with Brandenburg against Poles and Tartars, changed the direction of conquest, defeated the island-Danes, and abandoned the struggle against the allied Poles, Brandenburgers, Danes and Dutch only when, assailed by overwheming superiority, he risked the whole Baltic conquests of Gustavus

Adolphus in a war on three fronts. Then the Baltic was a Swedish lake, but the strength of Sweden was not on all its shores but was confined to Scandinavia and disappeared on the Continent, where Russians and Germans sought to attain their natural frontiers. The war Sweden fought for Finland, Ingermanland and the southern Baltic coast was founded on political geography. It was a war for the opposite coast which lies on a great roadstead between Libau and Reval before the Valdai hills and the Baltic uplands. The triangle Stockholm–Libau–Reval, whose strategic base is the islands of Dagö and Ösel, appear from the Swedish coasts as the most definite seat of power in the Baltic. Sweden, however, treated the problem presented not as a sea power but as a continental one and as such fought with her last strength for the Finnish-Slavic forward position which commands the eastern Continent on the flank. In this war 5,000,000 Swedes and Finns fought the whole Polono-Lithuanian and Russian world. When as a heroic adventurer Charles XII took up the task of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles X, the very heart of the Continent lay open to him and in the story of his heroic campaigns appear the names of Narva, Altranstadt, Smolensk, Poltava and Bender.

When Sweden made peace after his death and at Nystadt surrendered its overseas dominions, the Baltic world was completely re-arranged. Sweden lost Bremen, Verden, Stettin, Pomerania to Peene, Livonia, Esthonia, Ingermanland and the glacis of Viborg, and had to abandon the task of occupying the Baltic area.

If we regard this last heroic chapter in Swedish history, the most fateful event from the viewpoint of the Peace Settlement seems to be not the retreat from the German mainland, which was in the ordinary course of historical development, but the retreat from Livonia, Esthonia and Ingermanland and especially the loss of Finland to Moscow. If Sweden had retained Ingermanland and the Neva district as the bridgehead of Finland, the advance of Russia would probably have been diverted to the south where Peter the Great had already pushed as far as Baku and Azov. When Alexander I, with the approval of Napoleon, invaded Finland, that land was no longer capable of being defended.



STRATEGIC CONDITIONS ON THE BALTIC.

No more did Sweden advance by the way of Narva, but once again it strove for the hegemony of Scandinavia when under Bernadotte it marched with the Allies against Napoleon. It disposed of its last Pomeranian possession to Prussia, but obtained Norway from Denmark, which was confined to Jutland and the islands, but it had no joy of its new domain. When the Prusso-Danish war broke out, it kept out of the struggle and recognised in the new German empire erected on the fields of Düppel, Koniggrätz and Sedan the shield of European peace. So long as Bismark regulated the clock of Europe, no ill-omened hour struck for Sweden. The union with Norway seemed secure. Russia was involved in Asiatic and Balkan difficulties and the Baltic rolled peacefully between Sweden, Russia, Denmark and Germany. But when Britain emerged from her splendid isolation and concluded the *Entente cordiale* with France, relations in the north, too, became disturbed. The imperialism which set alliances and counter-alliances in conflict had a destructive influence even in Scandinavia.

The three northern peoples drew apart. The Danes, dynastically attached to Russia, divided from Germany by a historic feud and by reason of their maritime situation and their export trade dependent on England, consolidated themselves in isolation so as to derive full profit from this flank position on the North Sea and the Baltic. The Norwegians, who had long submitted to union with Sweden, obtained freedom. The escape of Norway from Swedish domination is explained by differences of outlook and character and by the Norse desire for independence, but the creation of a Norse kingdom on whose throne was seated a Danish prince and a daughter of Edward VII is explainable by Norway's geographical position, and its importance lies in the fact that Norway, which looks oceanwards, had succumbed to the power of attraction of Britain, who had entered into a new continental alliance. Sweden was not weakened by her loss and her peace was not disturbed.

Sweden found no support from the Versailles Powers when Finland claimed the Aaland Islands after the World War, for a change in the Baltic such as would have come about had this central flank position been given to Sweden and the strategic

position been upset, was not desired either by Britain or France, especially when the change would in no way weaken Germany.

On the other hand, the Western Powers were ready to place themselves on the side of Denmark and to reverse the course of history. Denmark recovered Lower Schleswig. It was the cleverest move made by the champions of self-determination to satisfy world opinion. It added to the spoils won from Germany and forced Germany from the Jutland peninsula back on to the Continent. The Germans saw the Jutland position—won with such difficulty—broken through and the renunciation of that position made an essential condition of the new world order. To the Belgians, who stood at the gates of Aachen, to the French who had again reached the Metz plateau, the Saar and the Alsatian debouches, to the Italians who held the Brenner in the heart of Tirol, to the Czechs who had planted their standards on the citadel of Bohemia, and to the Poles, who had pressed deep into territory with a German population and divided Eastern Germany at Danzig, the Danes were added, who had recovered the glacis between the Königsau and the Flensburg fjord without having risked anything.

The struggle between German and Dane is older than that between Dane and Swede. It was Charlemagne who first halted the Danes as they streamed south from the islands and North Jutland, and they lost their expansionist strength after the defeat of Gorm the Old and his submission to Henry I. But neither Henry nor Otto II, who crossed the Königsau, pushed on to Limfjord, dipped his lance in the Kattegat and created the Eider march, could secure the peninsula for Germany. It never became part of the Continent. Had Denmark in these earlier times been included in the empire, not only would the northern world have been open to Germany, but the open sea as well, the sea at which she arrived ten centuries too late; Otto II compelled Harold Bluetooth to swear fealty to him, but the Dane preserved a separate existence, took to his ships and extended his power over Sweden, Norway and England.

Thanks to geographical position, Denmark dominated the whole northern region which at the beginning of the XIth

century included the Norwegian coast, the Faroes, Britain, Ireland, Iceland and the coasts of Greenland. While Sweden was fighting for the rocky shores of Finland, Denmark had founded round the Belt a maritime empire.

Canute the Great in 1030 united under his sway England, Jutland, the Danish islands, South Sweden, Norway, Pomerania and the coast of East Prussia, wedded his daughter to the son of Conrad II, received the Eider march as his present and in alliance with the great Salic emperor held the destinies of the west in his hand. When King and Emperor leagued themselves with the Pope to protect Italy from Byzantines and Saracens, when Canute's fleet became the instrument wherewith to realise the idea of a universal German empire and Germans and Danes together went against the Poles, the first wave of Slavism, a Germanic world movement on land and sea seemed begun. It was, however, merely the creation of the joint wills of the two monarchs and was never more than a project. Conrad left as heritage to his son only the princely power and the war with the Papacy; Canute took his power and his plans together with him to the grave.

The empire of Canute fell into three parts, and a century of bloody fighting passed before Denmark attained empire again. It was Valdemar the Great who saved the land from dynastic wars and Slav invasions and in the crusade against the Baltic Slavs founded a new empire. The northern world had broken in pieces. Its development was turned into new channels by the Northmen who had settled down in France. From Normandy they won England and made it the centre of a new power. The older Danish sphere seemed to have retired eastwards. Jutland became a Danish flank position from which the Danes dominated South Sweden, the Kattegat and the mouth of the Elbe, and Denmark turned to the building of a Scando-Baltic empire. Valdemar began the advance eastward and then turning southwards sought to win the southern shore of the Baltic from Havel to the Lower Elbe. Had not Henry of Brunswick with stronger forces attacked the right bank of the Elbe and defeated both Danes and Slavs, Lauenburg and Mecklenburg would have been lost to Germanism. The Danes were driven back to Jutland and when Valdemar felt his position shaken he suddenly in 1162 acknow-

ledged the suzerainty of Frederick Barbarossa. It was the last submission of the Danes to the empire, and indicates at once the destructiveness of the German dualism and the extreme cleverness of Danish policy.

When the last Hohenstaufens were conquering the mediæval world, the successors of Canute were no longer vassals. The idea of Conrad II was dead. Two great figures carried out the new orientation of policy. Frederick II revived and extended the Ghibelline empire in the Mediterranean ; Valdemar II created a Danish empire in the Baltic area. The Danish fleet sailed east from Rügen, captured Ösel and Dagö, the key position of the eastern Baltic, and landed at Reval a crusading army which conquered Esthonia. At one stroke the northern Baltic fell into Danish hands. Swedes, Germans, Wends, Poles, Esths, submitted to a great sea Power. When Frederick handed Holstein, Mecklenburg and the mouth of the Elbe to Denmark, the Danish empire penetrated deeply into the German districts of the empire.

Then occurred a great event in the history of Germanism. Holsteiners, Frisians and Saxons rose against the foreigner, defeated the Danish king at Mölln and Bornhöved in the open field and forced him to recross the Eider. This counter-attack was not led by the imperial power ; it came from the people and was led by local nobles. It was a defensive movement, but it prevented the Danes advancing from Jutland. They retained the peninsula and their sea power, but their great advance on land which had won the Baltic coast from the Elbe to the Neva was definitely checked.

In spite of this check, however, Denmark remained powerful, and in the XIVth century again won hegemony in the Baltic. This third expansion culminated in the war for supremacy at sea which was waged between Denmark and Lübeck and ended in the victory of the Hansa. The forces of the latter took Copenhagen and planted on its walls the flag of Lübeck. If the Hansa had been fighting not merely for the trading privilege and commercial supremacy but for the glory of the empire, Germany would have emerged from the war as mistress of the northern world. But there was no room for such ideas then.

For a fourth time Denmark, beaten and weakened, rallied.

This time it was a woman, Margaret, the daughter of Valdemar Atterdag, who led the Danes again to empire. She conquered Sweden, gave the northern kingdoms a king in Eric XIII of Pomerania, and at Calmar in 1397 united the three countries in the Scandinavian League. This work of unification lasted for a century, but it was no longer dominated by Denmark, whose hour had passed. Sweden came to the front of the stage, threw off the Danish yoke, freed herself from the burdens laid on her by the Hansa and in her fight for freedom acquired Scandinavian ambitions. In vain Denmark with her waning strength fought against the younger and strongly nationalist Power, in vain she leagued herself against it with the Hansa. It was too late. At the end of the XVIth century the supremacy at sea had definitely passed from the Danes and the Hansa alike.

Denmark had, however, a part to play on the Continent. She came forward in the Thirty Years' War as the champion of North German Protestantism. The task was beyond her strength. Tilly defeated Christian IV and Wallenstein compelled him to renounce all attempts to interfere in the German wars. The disaster to the Danish power is revealed in the decline of the kingdom, in the surrender of the strategic points of Gothland and Ösel and in the withdrawal from the opposite coasts. When on June 6, 1660, Denmark definitely renounced in favour of Sweden all territory on the other side of the Sound and lost feudal rights over the Duchy of Schleswig, it retired from the war for supremacy in the northern area. The loss of the Swedish bridgehead and the land-bridge of South Jutland was not admitted as a historical necessity, however, and for another fifty years the Danes strove to recover their losses, fought to that end in alliance with Russia and Poland, and in the XVIIIth century nearly recovered the old frontiers. The effort was pregnant with consequences.

The Danish crown did not recover South Sweden but it won the Duchy of Gottorp and its capital, Kiel, and so secured the dominant flank position on the Kiel fjord. Now it abandoned its double effort and gave up the attempt to recover the land across the Sound in order to retain Norway and strengthen the position in South Jutland. Danish policy more and more embraced purely German lands and created

the Schleswig-Holstein question. In 1779 its aim had been realised. Denmark, Norway and Schleswig-Holstein were peacefully under Danish control. It was a triumph of dynastic policy which had secured for a weakened country German territory and at the same time satisfied its ambitions in Jutland.

Then came the French Revolution. Her position exposed Denmark to the pressure both of Britain and France. Britain from the sea demanded her co-operation ; Napoleon marched on her from Hamburg. Denmark sought to maintain herself against both menaces but showed a greater preference for her old continental ally, France, than for the sea power of Britain, whose fleet twice appeared off Copenhagen in order to compel the Danes to espouse the British cause. When on April 2, 1801, Nelson appeared in the Sound, the Danish fleet fought till it was destroyed ; when on September 2, 1807, the British came again, the Danes held out three days and only surrendered their fleet after Copenhagen lay shattered by bombardment. Britain now was absolute mistress of the seas. As a result, Denmark joined Napoleon and adhered to the continental system, in order to secure again the bases of her continental domains. Under the shadow of Napoleon she sought to recover the Swedish coasts and the land around the Elbe. The Scandinavian policy bore no fruit, but the advance on the Elbe was successful and at the Congress of Vienna was crowned by the huckster's methods. Denmark surrendered Norway to Sweden, Heligoland to Britain, received Swedish Pomerania but handed this to Prussia for the Duchy of Lauenburg, and as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg, her king entered the German Confederation. Schleswig-Holstein became the outer defences of Denmark ; her policy had triumphed alike over geography and nationalism. Where in the XIIIth century Valdemar II had fought at the height of his success, the Danes now stood firmly between the Elbe and the Trave. In the XIXth century her position appeared stronger than in the preceding two hundred years for, deprived of the Scandinavian coast and impotent at sea, her position on the Sound gave her possession of the key to the Baltic and as such she was the object of the jealous protection of the Western Powers and of Russia and so became a Power on the Continent.

She quickly assumed the offensive. She made the old Eider fortress, Rendsburg, the centre of gravity of a continental policy and used the constitutional struggles of the revolutionary 'forties for the suppression of the special rights of Schleswig and the incorporation of the duchy in the Danish state. When the duchy refused and Frisians and Holsteiners asserted in arms their right " to remain German," when their battle became part of the general German problem, Denmark once again occupied the centre of the European stage.

History cast her for the rôle of opponent in the preliminary act of the great drama of German unity. Her victorious armies were met by the troops of the Confederation, defeated, and driven from Flensburg into Alsen. Then Britain, Russia and Sweden intervened and secured an armistice for the Danes which restored their power to negotiate. When in the spring of 1849 they again attacked Schleswig and were again defeated and driven into Jutland, Russia again stayed the pursuer. Prussia quailed before the threat and left the duchies to their fate. The desperate battle for their German rights was carried on by gymnastic clubs and students' associations until Britain, Russia and France put an end to this second act of the drama. Denmark maintained its position in Jutland and in the ten years of European reaction, when Prussia and Austria quarrelled over the solution of the German question and the eastern question drove Britain and France to war with Russia, proceeded to de-Germanise the duchies. She neglected all the warnings and threats of the German Confederation, rejected all the protests of the duchies, refused the proposals for a compromise presented at Copenhagen by Britain and Russia, who sought to avoid the conflict they saw coming, and on March 30, 1863, added to the injustice and illegality already committed by incorporating Holstein and Lauenburg fiscally in the Danish state. Shortly after the process was completed by the new constitution which made Schleswig separate from Holstein, and merged it in the Danish state. The fate of the duchies seemed sealed. Schleswig became a Danish province ; Holstein and Lauenburg came completely under Danish rule. In vain the Confederation demanded the withdrawal of the constitutional law.

The Danes trusted to the help of Britain, France, Russia

and Sweden, but they completely failed to judge rightly the situation either in Germany or in Europe. They were no longer dealing with the Confederation which had contented itself with half-measures and hoped to counter the Danish claims by the elevation of Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg to be Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, they could not count on France, involved in the Mexican adventure, nor yet appeal to Russia, struggling with the Polish insurrection, and found themselves, supported only by the weak dilatoriness of Britain and a cautious Sweden, suddenly confronted by Prussia and Austria in arms.

Bismark had entered the workshop of German history. He had no intention of relieving a small German state and for its sake tolerating the presence of Denmark in a dangerous flank position before the mouth of the Elbe and in Kiel harbour under the protection of the Western Powers. He sought to recover the German northern marches and to secure Prussia's position on the Jutland glacis. As Austria adhered to Prussia in order not to lose her historic rôle of leader, it came to a war of two Great Powers against tiny Denmark, behind whom apparently no one stood, but whom possibly all the outlying Powers of Europe would support. The Danish prelude was over ; the great German drama had begun.

Now began the first battle for German unity. The war was one for the principle of nationalities and the right of self-determination, but it was guided by a statesman who knew how to master feelings and circumstances. From the beginning Bismark's aim was to incorporate Schleswig-Holstein in Prussia.

Germany had passed from a passive to an active rôle. No one held her back—or used the opportunity to obtain " compensations." Neither England nor Russia stirred. Even France, the old historic opponent, the only Power which had incessantly opposed Germanism ever since the Frankish world was divided, remained inactive. When an Austrian fleet appeared in the Baltic, a Prussian army on April 18, 1864, stormed the Düppel entrenchments and the Danes after severe fighting fell back before the allies into Jutland and Alsen, the control exercised over Germany by Europe was broken.

Not France but Britain summoned a conference, which had

no result. Bismark, having won Austria over to his policy, stood out for the Tondern–Apenrade frontier; the Danes, relying on British help at a later date, refused, and the war was resumed. When the Prussians stormed Alsen and the Austrians took Morsö, Denmark, now that she was driven over her natural frontier and bereft of all help, sought peace. She was driven back on her island bases, and after 869 years the Germans again stood victorious on the Limfjord. All the same, the Danes saved their key position on the Baltic, retaining not only the islands but North Jutland. The Peace, signed at Vienna on October 30, 1864, delivered to the allies only Lauenburg, Holstein and Schleswig. It was the first peace negotiated in full freedom by the German Powers.

Denmark's defeat was one of prestige. From this last war for the Jutland outposts she emerged without surrendering her historic position or her claims for a southern advance of her frontier. The Peace of Vienna had not been made by a European congress and so had no European sanction and the fifth clause of the Peace of Prague, concluded between Austria and Germany after Königgrätz, which provided for the transference by Austria to Prussia of all the rights obtained by the Peace of Vienna, also provided that the population of the northern districts of Schleswig should revert to Denmark if they expressed by plebiscite the desire to be united again to Denmark. Here was ground for hope. Danish tenacity and the sound political sense with which the island people is endowed preserved Denmark either from resigning herself to her loss or reaching out her hands prematurely to recover it.

Bismark underestimated the moral force of Clause V and trusted to time. Austria did not remind Prussia of her obligations but in 1878 consented to their abrogation. Denmark accepted the position, saw a Danish princess go to wed the heir to the British throne, and waited in far-sighted neutrality the day of European judgment. It dawned on June 18, 1919, when the victors at Versailles lent Denmark their aid to recover North Schleswig.

It was a gesture of historic significance: it reversed a German peace, the first signed by Bismark, "squeezed" Germany in the north and restored the predominance of the Western Powers in the Baltic. Denmark stood like the child

in the story book and held out her apron. She won back lost territory, but on the clever condition that the recovery should be sanctioned by plebiscite and so, supported by Britain and France, she attempted to win the strategic advanced position as far as the Treene and the Arlau. The plebiscite line was drawn in the treaty from the Flensburg fjord south-west to the mouth of the Leckau, and so included not only Hadersleben, Apenrade, Tondern and the islands of Alsen and Röm, but Flensburg, Leck, and the North Sea islands of Sylt, Föhr and Amrum. The line was all in favour of the Danes—that is, in favour of a Power attacking from Schleswig southward. It finds its natural continuation overseas in the channel which from Näshorn goes *via* Wyck to Heligoland south and south-west of Föhr and Amrum. As Heligoland was thus mixed up with the cession of Schleswig, then, if the plebiscite went against Germany, the new frontier placed all Schleswig, the Kiel canal and the mouth of the Elbe in the power of any Power attacking Germany from Jutland and the west coasts.

This position is worth investigating, and so one needs to examine the Heligoland question. The fate of Heligoland is not unconnected in the Versailles treaty with the fate of Schleswig. The clause in which the demolition of the fortress is laid down is definitely related to that concerning the Danish frontier. Heligoland, an old religious sanctuary of the Frisians, was secured by the Danes as part of Schleswig-Gottorp, but no attention was paid to it. When Britain took it from Denmark in 1807 in order to place the mouths of the Eider, the Elbe and the Weser under the threat of British cannon, Heligoland was a desolate island, chastised by wave and wind and endangered by erosion and collapse. The British used it as an open roadstead and a floating battery and willingly exchanged it in 1890 for Zanzibar. German naval policy soon transformed it. The ocean triangle whose base runs from the mouth of the Weser to Kiel harbour and whose apex is Heligoland became a fortress overnight. Britain recognised that Germany had made Heligoland an offensive bastion which allowed the German fleet, in spite of the unfavourable geography of the German coasts, to dominate the Bight and make incursions into the high seas. The creation

of a naval fortress compelled Britain in the World War to extend the blockade line further than ever before to the English Channel and the Orkneys in order to cut off Germany from overseas imports and overcome her by starvation.

Heligoland proved itself a true fortress, but German policy did not know how to use the weapon on which Germany's world position was built. Instead of setting the fleet to a war of life and death from which England could not have escaped until either the German armada was sunk or she herself was overcome, the fleet was hoarded and made a political instrument instead of being used as it should have been as a weapon ready to be sacrificed.

The Battle of Jutland was fought too late by the Germans. It ended in a doubtful victory for Germany, but did not alter the course of the war, though its echo fell as warning on the coasts of Jutland and the gates of the Baltic. Had the German fleet fought out the battle in the darkness even to its own destruction and carried the British fleet to destruction with it, it would have made the unparalleled and heroic sacrifice for which it seemed destined by the political and strategic conditions that obtained after the imperial policy had embarked on the rivalry with Britain. Not without reason did Britain demand the demolition of Heligoland, but the demolition is on a scale that admits no reparation. Not only the fortifications, the military establishments and the harbours, but even the works which made a new Heligoland out of rock and sand have been destroyed. As "harbours," the treaty indicated the north-east mole, the west dyke, the outer and inner breakwaters and the land lying between the two which had been won from the sea. Not merely was it the fortifications that Britain destroyed but works of utility whose loss leaves the crumbling island at the mercy of the elements.

To complete the work of destroying the German offensive base it remained only to deprive her of Sylt, Föhr and Amrum, which are the natural fortifications of that side of the triangle that faces Jutland. That was the meaning of the extension of the plebiscite to the islands for, if the vote went in favour of Denmark, the sea line Näshorn–Heligoland would be surrendered to Denmark. The attempt failed. The plebiscite gave to Denmark only the north bank of the Flensburg fjord

and Tondern. Germany saved by the ballot box the largest part of North Friesland and the Frisian Islands.

Denmark astutely declared herself satisfied with the recovery of the barren strategic line Apenrade–Tondern. At Flensburg and on the Leckau north and north-west of Schleswig, Germany stands over against Denmark and in this defensive position protects Kiel harbour and the Kiel canal.

The struggle for Jutland has been fought out by Germanic peoples and as such has led to the rivalry of Dane and German. The Anglo-Saxons decided the last round in favour of the maritime northern country. To-day the Danes live in their maritime realm buttressed by the Versailles treaty, but they cannot escape the consequences of their geographical position in which they are imprisoned alike on the mainland and on the islands. At Versailles they received a veritable Danaan gift unless they can defend their independence and their neutrality. They may not think of attacking Germany and they cannot renounce the protection of the key position between the North Sea and the Baltic against any foreign claim. They receive no dispensation through membership of the League of Nations, but *incur obligations under Article XVI* of the Covenant and so are faced with a triple problem.

Denmark since the Northern War has never needed to be so anxious about her Baltic position as to-day. The struggle for that sea, after a long pause, has reached a stage in which Denmark must answer the question whether she will retain freedom to act as she thinks fit or quietly adapt herself to existing conditions by silently abandoning her key position or by expressly declaring her perpetual neutrality. The question is dominated by the strategic problem created by Denmark's geographical position.

The entrance to the Baltic is through Danish waters. It was before the war divided into three sections, the Öresund, the Big and the Little Belt. To-day it is composed of the Öresund, since it is agreed that the obligations assumed by the contestants during the war and by Denmark not to use the Great and the Little Belt for military purposes has international weight to-day. In 1914 Germany weakly allowed herself to consent to a renunciation which stands in extraordinary contrast to the policy adopted in Belgium. She renounced the use of

both Belts in order not to drive Denmark into the enemy camp, although she was legally entitled to use both, and their use was urgently required by naval strategy. The German fleet therefore lost the strategic superiority in the Kattegat and the British were able to neglect the Baltic flank and pin the Germans down by a frontal threat. On May 31, 1916, the British fought Jutland with no apprehensions of an attack in rear.

The Öresund, the chief passage between the Danish and Swedish coasts, did not remain untraversed during the war. It was used by the British to send submarines into the Baltic until the Germans by mines, nets and ships blocked the "Drogden," the narrow channel running south-eastwards between the main Danish island of Zeeland and the little island of Saltholm just outside the limit of Danish and Swedish suzerainty, and so made the Baltic a *mare clausum*. It was a defensive measure which allowed them to appear before Ösel and Dagö and in the Gulf of Finland, but had no influence on events in the North Sea.

To-day the Sound is the centre of a grave problem, since it is the only possible passage in a future war so long as it is not formally neutralised and the Baltic Sea closed. This would be of great importance to Denmark, Sweden, Russia and Germany, but is against the interests of Poland, the Baltic States and the Western Powers. The Sound thus by the Versailles settlement remains open to the maritime Powers. An attempt of Russia to close it by international treaty failed. Denmark attempted, in order to avert an open conflict, to find a way out by offering to deepen the "Drogden" to 8.5 metres. The Danes, far from rendering difficult the use of the Öresund, are actually making it easier for warships to use their sovereign waters at the entry to the Baltic. They are facilitating transit, which is all to the good for peaceful trading if this requires the use of big ships, but behind this they base their position at the entrance to the Baltic on Britain and the Versailles settlement.

The Danes deal with the situation as the recipient of North Schleswig. Russia stands outside the European system and Germany is not strong enough to influence the course of events, and so a new strategic situation is created which has fixed the bases of the Baltic problem in favour of the Western Powers and their eastern client states. This method of dealing

with the case gives the measures of the new conditions and is much more important than Denmark's proposed abolition of armaments.

Denmark sees herself as holder of the key to the Baltic in virtue of Britain's connection with the Baltic States and France's with Poland, and seeks to confine the growing dangers of the position by deepening the Sound, at one and the same time seeking to anticipate fulfilment of the conditions imposed by Article 16 of the League Covenant and to elude it. The Danes manage their business cleverly but they cannot alter the fact that the Baltic lines of communications Copenhagen–Ösel and Copenhagen–Danzig have become danger lines for Denmark. As long as no German fleet rides in Kiel harbour and commands these lines on the flank, the Baltic equilibrium is in the hands of the Western Powers.

If, turning from the Danish problem, we cast a last glance at the great Baltic area, we see to our astonishment that it is Poland and the Baltic States who rule it in its new shape, and that it is Poland with the support of France who assures it from the Continent while Denmark, supported by England, assures it from the sea ; Germany and Sweden, both great homologous coastal states, appear thrown into the background and Russia, the continental Power on the edge of the area, is thrust outside altogether. That is an impossible situation. Neither the dispossessed Powers nor Russia can put up with this state of things, which denies the facts of history, contradicts the facts of political geography and serves the interests of none of the states on the Baltic.

CHAPTER X

HUNGARY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CENTRAL EUROPE

In the foregoing chapters has been described what may be considered the inner line of encirclement placed round Germany by the Versailles settlement. We now come to the outer ring which is formed by Jugoslavia, Roumania and Italy and includes inside it Austria and Hungary. The ring has been created from the southern provinces of Austria and from the most important districts once won by the Magyars, and its significance is most easily understood by looking at it from a Hungarian point of view, because the Little Entente which was formed under the ægis of France by Czechs, Jugoslavs and Roumanians is dominated not so much by French-inspired opposition to Germany as by their unnatural relation to Austria and Hungary.

For Hungary, too, the Versailles dictators have prepared an impressive fate : the Magyars have been driven from the lands where their ancestors in the IXth century, after long wanderings, pitched their camp. The Slavs had avoided the open plain and had retired to the Moravian hills, the natural fortress of Bohemia, and the land between the Save and the Drave, when the Magyars appeared at the gates of the west and under the name of Hungarians entered western history. They had come from the Urals, had found in Arpad a powerful leader, had crossed the Dnieper, the Dniester and the Carpathians, and pitched their last bivouac as nomads on the Theiss. They conquered the Moravian glacis, broke through the German eastern marches and following Attila's path rode into France and Italy, plundered the Vardar valley, caused a panic in Byzantium and only settled down after the Germans had defeated them on the Unstrut and the Lech.

There are three decisive battles in Hungarian history—each a one-day battle. The first was on the Lechfeld in 955. The defeat there of the Magyars by Otto the Great drove them permanently from the domains of the Holy Roman Empire

and caused them to settle permanently on the steppe, the hills and the river valleys of the Danube–Theiss country behind a clearly-defined western frontier. The Magyars are the only nomadic people of Altaic stock which has taken root in Europe and risen to be a national state. They soon realised that they must extend their rule from the plain to the hills surrounding it, in order to be able to live undisturbed and in security. After brief hesitation between east and west, they turned away from Byzantium and as a young nation entered the Christian Germanic civilisation of the west. They climbed up the steps of cultural progress later than the western nations who had centuries of development behind them but, under the leadership of the Arpad kings, they went ahead rapidly. The memory of the Battle of the Lechfeld was still living when Arpad's grandson, Stephan, received the kingly title from the Pope and definitely wedded the Arpad kingdom to the west. Hungary from that time appears as a dam against the Slav flood and divides North Slavs from South Slavs at the decisive point in the heart of the Danube basin.

Hungary was founded in opposition to all the surrounding states. The Arpad kings did not bow either to the Piasts or the Premyslids and long refused to admit the sovereignty of the Empire. They surrounded their country with a girdle of waste land which ran through forests and hills, took the Turkish peoples of the steppe, Petschenegs, Jazyges and Cumans into their service as frontier guards, and brought droves of German settlers to build castles and towns in the threatened eastern march. Within three centuries they extended their realm from this central position across the natural glacis into the surrounding lands.

From the beginning, Hungarian expansionist policy had two clear and powerful motives. The steppe race was accustomed to open spaces and was ruled by the spirit of conquest and the exposed yet confined area in which they settled needed the surrounding hills as natural frontier-barriers and an outlet to the sea. At an early date, therefore, the Magyars crossed the Waag to the March, climbed the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps and opened the way to the sea, but their sound strategic instinct led them not merely to occupy the Carpathians but the glacis in front of them towards the east

and the south. At the end of the XIth century the Magyars were already on the southern bank of the Balkan Danube and in the area between the Drave and the Save, and in 1102 entered Dalmatia. In the XIIIth century, Hungary for the first time was tested as the bulwark of the west when even in defeat she stemmed the Mongol invasion. The Magyars had advanced over the Carpathians as far as the Dniester when Gengis Khan broke out from the Altai and conquered the Middle and Near East. The Russians received the full force of the great attack on Europe. Then Batu Khan turned against Poland and Hungary and, last of the Attilas, threatened to destroy the west. He devastated Poland, defeated the Silesians, turned left and broke into Hungary from three sides and advanced on Pest. The Magyars were slow to defend themselves. They suffered from the general confusion of Europe which had culminated in the great conflict between Frederick II and Gregory IX and in the adventurous foundation of the Latin Eastern Empire and innumerable Frank principalities in the Levant.

When Bela IV saw the enemy in his land, he summoned his Magyar and Croat levies to meet him on the Sajo, a tributary of the Theiss, but the Tartar reached the river first, stormed the royal camp and overwhelmed the defenceless Magyars with their arrows.

This was the second battle which decided Hungary's fate. When in the early summer of 1243 Batu retired through Bosnia, Serbia and Bulgaria to the Volga, he left Hungary devastated and depopulated. Bela did all he could to restore it but fortune had turned her face from the Arpads. Dynastic quarrels and risings of the nobles filled the second half of the XIIIth century and when the line of Arpad died out in 1301 the kingdom seemed doomed to disappearance.

But the election to the throne of Charles Robert of the Neapolitan Anjou line brought a new and strong dynasty into the land. The new king fought in Dalmatia, which had become alienated from Hungary and seemed likely to fall to Venice, and crossed the Transylvanian Alps in order to recover the Magyar lands in Wallachia in which Roumanian princelings were seeking to found realms of their own. He was defeated by Venice and in the Wallachian campaign,

but he strengthened his house and his kingdom against overwhelming odds.

His son Louis raised the strengthened kingdom again to the height of a self-governing empire. His campaigns were successful. He reconquered Dalmatia, overthrew the rebel princes of Bosnia, Serbia, Roumania, Moldavia and Red Russia and in 1370 added the Polish crown to that of St. Stephan. This was the period of the greatest development of the royal power in Hungary on dynastic and feudal bases. It led to the second great period of expansionist policy, but that expansion could no longer find expression offensively but was called in the conquered lands to a defensive mission of peculiar difficulty.

The Turks had appeared on the Balkan glacis and were pressing up the old historic route of the Danube. The Magyars were called to perform their allotted task of defending the west against the Ottoman and Islam. They performed this task for more than a century. They created the brilliant defensive system of the Banats which stretched from the Red Tower pass to the Bosnian hills. They kept control of Wallachs, Serbs and Croats until the feudal state succumbed before the war machine of the Sultans and their autocratic power. They fought until Austria was strong enough to do without the shield of Hungary and when it was shattered to take over the conflict at the most critical moment for Europe. That moment came when France denied the solidarity of the west and François I allied himself with Suleiman to bring about the ruin of Charles V.

Louis of Hungary saw the Turkish menace advance over the Balkans and the Magyar patrols forced over the Danube by the Spahis. A few years after his death, Murad I fought the first battle of Kossovo and drove the Serbs back to the Morava. The Magyars thrice undertook a great offensive campaign. In 1398 Sigismund led the last crusading army of western chivalry to the Danube and at Nicopolis ascended the southern bank in order to advance on Constantinople; in 1444 the Jagellon Vladislav—chosen king in 1439 as substitute for the unborn Ladislas, Sigismund's grandson—succeeded by breach of a truce in reaching Varna on the Black Sea and in 1448 the regent John Hunyadi fought the

Turks at Kossovo. On all three occasions the Turks were victorious.

At this period Hungary became a political reality. The centre of gravity, which since the days of Stephan had been in the south, was now placed midway between south and west. Hunyadi still thought of Hungary as a Balkan Power thrust into the Continent; his son, Matthias Corvinus, made Hungary a Central European Great Power. The father led the Magyars over the Danube and crowned his labours by the first conquest of Belgrade from the Turks; the son turned to fight Bohemia and the Emperor Frederick III, in the conflict with George of Podiebrad conquered Moravia and Silesia, invaded Lower Austria and tried to secure for himself the Imperial crown in order to resume the war against the Ottomans on a European basis. Hunyadi completed his life's work; Matthias, because of it, came to grief. The Magyar state remained tied to the position taken up by Hunyadi but the European idea which was the living force in the design of his son was never again lost in Magyar history. Hungary, in consequence of the Turkish menace, had realised that the Danube basin is a natural unity which politically is connected with the German lands from which the river flows and binds east and west by a natural link. Matthias was not able to give imperialist expression to this conception, but the conception remained a living force surviving even the collapse of the mediæval state and the period of servitude to the Turk.

In the beginning of the XVIth century the Turks, whom Matthias had checked in Bosnia and Serbia, broke through the Banats and appeared on the Hungarian plain. When in 1521 they took Belgrade and so turned the key fortress of the Morava valley towards the north, Hungary's southern front was pierced in the flank. In vain Louis II tried to concentrate the Magyar army for a desperate battle. Attacked on August 29, 1526, by Suleiman at Mohacz, he lacked many contingents and the whole of the Siebenbürgen levies. He and his whole army were cut to pieces.

This was the third decisive battle, but this time the disaster overwhelmed not only the monarch and the army but also the state. Suleiman, the ally of France, decided Hungary's fate. He gave John Zapolya of Siebenbürgen his support and the

man who was too late at Mohacz held, after severe fighting with Ferdinand I of Austria, the brother-in-law of the fallen king, Eastern Hungary and Buda its capital as a Turkish fief. Ferdinand ruled the north and the west and a part of Croatia. When after Zapolya's death, the Sultan took Buda and Danubian Hungary under his control and left Zapolya's heirs only Siebenbürgen and the land between the Theiss and the Carpathians, Hungary lay broken into three, robbed of unity and statehood. She was the first victim of France's continental policy.

The conception of Matthias to connect Hungary ever more closely to Central Europe, to the House of Austria and to the empire was revolutionised by the catastrophe caused by the Franco-Turkish alliance. Not Hungary, but Austria, came to supremacy, not the Magyar but the German led Central Europe in the great conflict which, after the entry of Turkey into the European system, was fought on two fronts. The revolution was inherent in the circumstances of Europe. The Magyars were a stranger race numbering only a few millions and an offshoot of Christian Germanic civilisation, and as such were too weak to assume leadership and too far from the decisive area on which the conflict of Europe would be fought. The battles which the Central Powers fought in the east were but battles to secure their rear: the decision lay wherever the battle was fought for the possession of the Rhine.

This elementary strategic fact cannot be sufficiently emphasised. It is emphasised here because France could consider the battle of Mohacz and the downfall of Hungary as the first great blow against the Central European system since her own attack—the first in the Upper Rhine area—in 1444 was checked by the Swiss at St. Jacob and before the gates of Strassbourg.

When France recognised the Turks as ally, she not only gave them entry into the state system in process of formation but decisively influenced its evolution. Hungary was deprived of its border position and made a Central European state. The geographical conception of Central Europe coincided with the newly-acquired political conception. When the Turks took Buda and Belgrade they pushed still farther into the central European mass. Paradoxically enough, the

formation of the political Central Europe was at once completed and crippled by the fall of Hungary.

French policy, when it drew the Turks into its net, did not intend to drive Hungary into the arms of Austria and so strengthen the Habsburg power, but contented itself with the partition of the land, in the expectation that the Turks would soon succeed in completing their work and carrying out at a more favourable hour a concentric attack on Vienna from Buda and Belgrade. Austria realised how closely her destiny was tied to Hungary's. When Suleiman moved against Louis, Ferdinand I in vain begged his brother the Emperor Charles V to come to the aid of the king ; he wrote expressly of the threatened "*perdicion du royaume de Hongrie et par consequent de mes pays d'Autriche.*" The Turks did all in their power to fulfil their mission. They appeared before Vienna and in Styria and shook Austria to her foundations but could not deliver the death stroke. For 150 years they ruled Hungary and yet could not eradicate Magyarism. The triple partition of the Magyar state was actually a means to the maintenance of the idea of a Magyar state.

While the Magyars of the plain were tributary to the Pasha of Buda and Habsburg Hungary was reduced to a military frontier, Magyar princes ruled in Siebenbürgen as vassals of the Sultan and maintained in the shadow of the Transylvanian Alps the political strength of the partitioned nation. The salvation of Siebenbürgen from being completely absorbed by Turkey and from too early union with the Habsburg empire was of capital importance for the re-erection of the Magyar national state and makes mockery of the Versailles settlement in which Siebenbürgen appears as Roumanian territory.

Many settlers of Daco-Roman origin inhabited Transylvania but they never ruled the land. Szeklers, Magyars and Saxons were the masters of the state and met as "nations" in the assembly in order to elect princes, settle taxation and arrange for military levies. Siebenbürgen in the XVIth century became a powerful state. The Magyar nobles, who during the Turkish period were chosen princes of Transylvania, incarnated the will of the nation. The vassalage of Báthory, Bocskay and Bethlen Gábor never became subjection. They built up Siebenbürgen to political individuality and defended

with success the natural flank position of the mountain and forest land in order to keep their independence between the Sultan and the Habsburg. When the Thirty Years' War broke out Siebenbürgen was called the farthest outpost of Central Europe in the Turkish and Polish east. It fought against Austria, but that was the result not of vassalage to Turkey but of national feeling and the religious opposition to the Catholicism of the Imperial house. Siebenbürgen fought in the Turkish ranks and as ally of France but not as the Sultan's vassal, not as a French client state but as a member of the Central European state system fought for the resurrection of Hungary under Transylvanian leadership. Whenever it fought against this idea, it fought against a fundamental geographical law and to its cost.

When we glance at the political situation then existing we have to begin with the policy of France. At the beginning of the Thirty Years' War France was involved in the troubles caused by the death of Henri IV, whom Ravaillac's act took from the accomplishment of great designs. These culminated not in the *grand dessin*, so often mentioned in Sully's memoirs, of the formation of a Christian League of fifteen states conceived as a league for perpetual peace, but in the great practical attempt to create a balance of power on the Continent between France, Spain and the Netherlands by exchanges of territory and so to win the Rhine–Rhône line as the main line of movement of French policy. In this plan are concealed ideas which appear again in the Versailles settlement and the efforts of France to have world guarantees of her "security." Henri began by freeing the Rhine–Rhône line at its extremities from Spanish domination and by concealing by diplomatic diversions the fact that France had set foot on the Rhine. The attack on the extremities was not a warlike one. Henri supported the Dutch Netherlands in their war of independence and compelled Charles Emanuel I of Savoy to surrender the Rhône line from Geneva to Lyons in exchange for Saluzzo, one of the gates of Piedmont. Savoy was thus compelled to withdraw from the districts of Bugey, Val Romey and Gex on the left bank of the Rhine, and at this price bought entry into the European state system. The French then advanced on the west flank of Switzerland, where to-day, thanks to Article 435

of the Versailles treaty, they stand in a dominant and unassailable position. In 1594 the whole Rhône valley from Geneva to the sea was in French hands, Franche Comté was surrounded from the north and south and over the shoulder of Savoy France looked threateningly on Spanish Italy from which she had been driven by Charles V.

Henri IV was murdered just when, in alliance with Britain and the Netherlands, he had taken the Protestant side and was entering on a great struggle, and France's advance was arrested for twenty years. Austria and Spain won time to concentrate their strength and win the first advantage in the Bohemian war. When Austria overthrew the Czechs, compelled the Elector Frederick to submit, drove with Spanish help the Protestant leaders Mansfeld and Christian of Brunswick from the Upper Rhine to the Netherlands and compelled Bethlen Gábor to renounce the throne of Hungary, France's position seemed again threatened on two fronts. Richelieu on his arrival to power laid down as the basis of French strategy the opening of the passes of Piedmont and the Valtelline, the crossing of the Ardennes and the strengthening of the position at Metz in order to cover the advance against the Rhine and win entry to Germany. The policy of Henri IV was renewed, but in a more elastic form and with wider scope ; it was related to the direct control of the Rhine and was perfected by the conception of uniting all the outlying Powers. Richelieu's name appears on the treaties which freed Gustavus Adolphus from the Polish war, and French embassies arrived in Transylvania and on the Bosporus.

Returning to Transylvania, we find Bethlen Gábor appearing thrice before Vienna in alliance with Austria's foes and thrice being defeated. But he did not abandon his anti-Habsburg policy and sought a fourth time to win the road to Vienna, but this time with new associates. He was fully cognisant of Gustavus's preparations for the German war, had already received French promises of support and had declared himself ready for the venture when he died on November 5, 1629.

Transylvanian policy remained true to his aims under Rakoczy. It fell, not through its Habsburg policy, but because it stumbled into the eastern wars when George Rakoczy II turned to the east after his father's death and in 1657,

in spite of the warning of the Estates and the protest of the Porte, allied himself with Charles Gustavus of Sweden against Poland. The adventure ended in catastrophe. The Prince was deposed by the Sultan, attacked in his own territory by a Turkish punitive expedition, defeated and mortally wounded at Klausenburg. Siebenbürgen never recovered from this blow. Its international position and its national leadership were alike gone. George II's successor, Michael Apasi, maintained himself against the Habsburgs, but fell ever more under Turkish control. Austria and Habsburg-Hungary were rousing themselves to fight Turkey for the vassal state of Siebenbürgen, which could not refuse to serve the Turk in the field when in 1664 the Turks, following Suleiman's tracks, again moved west.

It is worth while to discuss here the political development of Habsburg-Hungary since Mohacz. Imperial Hungary since 1526 had not ceased to guard the frontier against the Turks. Magyars, Croats, Slovenes and the German settlers bade defiance to the crushing Turkish attacks for a century and a half. They emerged unbroken, even from the overwhelming invasion which brought the allies of France into Styria. The defence of Sziget by Niklas Zriny, who held Suleiman's great army at bay for four weeks, shows the heroic side of the struggle. When Suleiman's son, Selim II, after the storming of Sziget turned back from Vienna, Vienna was indeed saved, but Maximilian II had bought peace by a promise of ten years' tribute. It was the darkest hour of Habsburg-Hungary.

While Siebenbürgen was winning an independent position as a Turkish vassal state under the leadership of Báthory, Bocskay and Sigismund Rakoczy, a position given European significance by Bethlen Gábor, the subjects of the Habsburgs had to fight at once against the Turks and against the reactionary policy of the successors of Maximilian II. When Rudolf II, the darkest figure of a proud house, ascended the throne and threatened the Hungarians with the loss of political and religious liberties, the unnatural relation of the two races was severed by a rising which shook Austria to its foundations. The Hungarians made Stephan Bocskay their leader, rode at will as in former times through Austria and Styria and so terrified the ruling house that the princes rose against the

emperor and compelled him to give way. Rudolf appointed his brother, Matthias, Palatine of Hungary, and guaranteed the Magyar rights. But the concession came too late, for the spirit of reaction had been reinforced by the realisation that Austria could only be held together by a strong centralising policy. Absolutism allied itself to the Catholic conception of the state and demanded the submission of the Magyars to the rule of Vienna, but in the XVIIth century Vienna was not strong enough to carry out this policy.

Bohemia as a state disappeared in the Thirty Years' War. The state of Hungary remained to a certain extent in existence, thanks to the duty of defence which kept the Magyars on the Drave and to the separate position of Transylvania. In spite of this the kingdom of St. Stephan was but a shadow realm, since Habsburg-Hungary occupied only a narrow zone stretching from the Dalmatian coast to the frontiers of Galicia; Siebenbürgen fell into confusion after the death of George Rakoczy II, and there was a graveyard peace in the Turkish vilayets round the Drave, the Danube and the Theiss. Then the great Turkish war of 1664 convulsed all Hungary.

Siebenbürgen and Turkish-Hungary were called to battle against Habsburg-Hungary and the empire. The Turks moved on Neuhäusel, but when they sought to cross the Raab they met the Imperialists at St. Gotthard and were defeated. Leopold was content with the victory and invited them a few days later to negotiate. He surrendered Neuhäusel and Grosswardein, recognised Michael Apasi as prince of Siebenbürgen and so bought a twenty years' truce.

The treaty brought Hungary to the depths of despair. They did not ask why the emperor, fighting on two fronts, had consented to such a humiliating surrender, but they conspired against Leopold under the leadership of Peter Zriny in order, relying on their rights as nobles, to place the crown of St. Stephan on a worthier head. The rising was crushed in blood. Leopold's victory ought, however, not to be considered as a Habsburg victory over Magyar nationalism but as a victory of absolutism over a feudal nobility. A tragic combination of circumstances has falsified this war of principles. Had it been fought out on national soil between a national Hungarian king and his assembly of nobles, its significance would not have

been mistaken. But it was misrepresented because the antagonists were the Habsburg empire and its Magyar subjects. When the Vienna Government proceeded methodically to people the devastated Hungarian lands with German and Slav colonists and to place German garrisons in the frontier fortresses, when it planted Suabians east of the Platten lake, Slovaks in the Maros region, and orthodox Serbs in Syrmia, this colonisation policy seemed to the Magyars to be not a measure dictated by circumstances but a threat to the Magyar nation. They fought not only against absolutism but also against a foreign rule, not so much for the rights of their nobles as for the maintenance of their status as a nation, not against union with the Germans but against the Habsburg system. Hungary maintained this historic position until the Dual Monarchy fell in pieces.

This struggle thrice involved Hungary in France's continental system without its being directed against the Central European community—first, when George Rakoczy I in 1643 as the ally of France and Sweden advanced against Vienna; secondly, when in 1678 a new revolt flamed from the ashes of the rebellion of the nobles and Hungary, under the leadership of Tököly, separated from Austria; and thirdly, when the grandson of George Rakoczy moved against the Habsburgs in the War of the Spanish Succession. It was a policy of despair, and in consequence of it Hungary fought on the wrong side in the imperialist wars of Louis XIV, during the War of the Spanish Succession and in the great Turkish War in which the Danube lands were freed from Turkish rule. It was not among the victors when the royal fortress of Ofen was torn from the Turks.

When, after the capture of the old capital, Leopold summoned the Hungarian assembly to Pressburg and compelled it to give up its power of election and to admit the hereditariness of the crown of St. Stephan, and when the estates of Siebenbürgen in 1687 after more Imperialist victories placed themselves under the protection of the Habsburgs, Hungary's fate was doubly decided. It was delivered from Turkish rule but it did not recover its old freedom. It rose to a new existence in alliance with Austria and under the Habsburgs and cursed with this tragic disunion faced a dark future.

The situation was most clearly revealed in the War of the Spanish Succession when under Francis Rakoczy II the Hungarians once again took up arms against the Vienna absolutism for a free Hungary. Again the French tempter promised help. While the French fought in Flanders and on the Bavarian uplands and the Austria of Eugène was making its last effort, Hungary rose in arms from the Javorinka hills to the mouth of the Theiss. Even in West Hungary the old hostility flared up to the great advantage of the national army which, led by Alexander Károlyi and armed with French cannon, was fighting for the resurrection of the old Magyar kingdom.

Francis Rakoczy allowed himself to be misled by the suggestions of the French envoy, and committed the unforgivable sin. He summoned an assembly at Onod which declared the Imperial House deposed from the throne of Hungary. He thus played into France's hands, for Louis XIV had no intention of guaranteeing the Magyars the rewards, the hope of which had caused them to take the field. He did not sign the project of a protective alliance with which his envoy had deluded the Magyars. He knew that at Onod the Magyars had burned the bridges behind them and would have to fight to the bitter end. And fight they did until the whole land was devastated, yet in this war they fought against themselves, since Hungary was really on Austria's side. They went on fighting until Louis's star paled and the Austria of Eugène lightened their submission by modifying the absolute rule.

The peace which ended this Austro-Magyar civil war was agreed upon on May 1, 1711, at Szatmar by two Magyars—the Imperialist general, John Pálffy, and Alexander Károlyi, Rakoczy's general. The Magyars recognised the hereditary nature of the crown of St. Stephan in the House of Habsburg; the emperor amnestied those who had taken part in the war and recognised the constitution. Hungary re-entered the Central European system and marched again eastwards.

France had lost a notable piece on the political chess-board. The collapse of Turkey, the failure of Conti in the matter of the royal election in Poland, the abandonment by Charles XII of the Franco-Swedish alliance, the fall of Sweden and the return of Hungary to the Habsburg empire broke up the French encirclement of Germany. In the XVIIIth century

Hungary did not depart from Austria's side. She stood on the military frontiers against the Turks, bled on the battle-fields of the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War and pursued by peaceful methods her struggle for her national constitution and independence.

The French Revolution awoke no echoes in this backward, agricultural land. When in 1807 Napoleon took up the policy of Louis XIV and called the Magyars to rise against the rule of Vienna, the Magyars, Saxons, Croats and Slovenes remained deaf. They were concentrated in the Banats against the Turks but they put brave but badly armed militia in the field against the French. This time they were not induced to serve French aims. Napoleon's grandiose attempt to create a serried front out of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, a new Magyar national state, and the complaisant Turks in order to recreate the encirclement system, remained merely a project. Thus in Europe's second emancipation from French hegemony the Magyars stood, despite the anomalies of their position, faithful to the Habsburgs and the Austrian Empire.

When Metternich, the last great Austrian statesman, carried the legitimist principle to victory at the Congress of Vienna, Hungary was among the victors. The Vienna Cabinet had no reason to fear the Magyars so long as it respected their rights and did not push its centralising policy too far. Metternich valued the Magyar constitution first because it was a conservative one and secondly because he saw in it not merely an easily handled instrument of government, but a valuable means of keeping down either a democratic movement or an attempt to secure full independence. Metternich refused all reform, but thereby he released from their chains the aspirations which he believed he had banished for ever.

The democratic movement in Hungary had its origin in the ideas of Szechenyi, who sought to extend the aristocratic constitution in a democratic sense, and culminated in a revolution which shattered the mediæval estates-system and the patriarchal absolutism, which severed the connection with Austria and in 1850 gave birth to the radical Magyar republic of Kossuth. It was a misfortune that this transformation of Hungary to a modern constitutional state was part of a war with Austria, for thereby the rift between the two countries

was again opened. The conflict had its tragic side when one remembers that Austrians and Magyars had fought side by side in the 'forties and that now Hungary was only overcome when the reaction in Vienna had conquered the Austrian revolution which Hungary in vain had sought to help.

On April 14, 1850, the Magyar parliament passed a motion of Kossuth which proclaimed the sovereignty of the nation, the independence of Hungary and the exclusion of the Habsburgs from the throne—a parallel to that of Francis Rakoczy in 1707. The Kossuthian state fell before the joint attack of the conservative Powers. When Vienna sought help from Russia and Nicolas I sent a division to the Danube, a corps over the Red Tower pass and an army over the Carpathians, the Magyar cause was lost. After a heroic resistance they were surrounded and crushed. Restored to Austria, they were again subjected to a régime of revenge. The tribunal of blood again sat in the land and many noble heads fell. As in Tököly's and Francis Rakoczy's day many fragments of the national army escaped over the Turkish frontier. Many wore the turban and in the Crimean War fought against the hated Russia in the ranks of the Bashi-Bazouks. The Magyar has never forgiven the Russians for their intervention in a war of liberation which was not revolutionary but national.

For nine years the land lay under a military dictatorship, and then the war in Italy, which Austria lost, released it from its chains and allowed the prosecution of a new and better-guided war for the constitution. When Austria, defeated at Königgrätz, abandoned the leadership of Germany and transferred the political centre of gravity of the Habsburg monarchy to the east, a new future opened out to Hungary. In 1867, Hungary, raised to equality with Austria, and in possession of a new constitution, became a strong constitutional kingdom, whose crown the Emperor Francis Joseph assumed at Ofen on June 8, 1867. From now it was an active partner in the future of the Dual Monarchy. After the loss of her Italian provinces and her position in Germany, Austria was not strong enough to bring Hungary under her own sovereignty. She abandoned the patriarchal relation and had recourse to the idea of an independent Magyar state as was demanded by the whole course of history.

When Austria became Austria-Hungary and dualism became the constitutional foundation of the Danube monarchy there soon began the conflict of nationalities which always has been latent in the confusion of races in the Habsburg empire. The principle of nationalities began to sap the foundations of the great dynastic structure which had united the middle Danube basin with the flank positions necessary to its completion, the central Bohemian fortress and the maritime tableland of Istria and Dalmatia, to the great material and cultural benefit of the whole. Austria and Hungary were destroyed from within. Neither the Austro-Germans nor the Magyars were strong enough to keep down the Slavs or bind them to the empire as the "third nation." The Magyars weakened their own national state by their policy of violating the rights of the minorities, the Germans saw Austria fall because of the anachronistic statesmanship of a de-Germanised government. It was an Austria in dissolution that fought in the World War, in which once again Austrians and Magyars stood shoulder to shoulder.

Both knew that they fought not for the expansion but for the existence of their countries. They fought allied to Germany for the existence of the Central Powers, for the third time attacked from the east and the west, fought apparently as attackers, although the initiative had been completely forced on them. This time everything was against them. The war for the Rhine, for the Dardanelles, for the Adriatic, for commercial supremacy, threw the burdens of centuries on their shoulders. The Hungarians staked their lives on all the battlefields : Magyars, Szeklers, Croats and Hungarian Germans fell by the hundred thousand in Galicia, on the Carpathians, in Serbia, on the Isonzo and on the Piave. But they fought under an evil star. They did not go on fighting till the cannon were silent but in the middle of the last battle were summoned home to a land in revolution and left their ranks at the order of the revolutionary government. Count Michael Károlyi secured power and, trusting to the suggestions of the French, delivered the land to the enemies, who were breaking in on all sides. As in the days of Tököly and Francis Rakoczy, France abandoned Hungary. Jugoslavs, Czechs and Roumanians entered on the heritage of Arpad. In vain Károlyi sought like a desperate

gambler to save the situation when he threw the country into the arms of the Bolshevists. When Budapest hoisted the Red Flag, the Roumanian army as the mandatory of the *Entente* Powers advanced over the Theiss, the waters of which they had not even seen during the war. Red Hungary collapsed.

Hungary was driven from the lands which in her thousand years of war she had secured round the Danube–Theiss basin in order to maintain herself with the aid of Germany in the Central European sphere between North Slavs and South Slavs, and her fall was appalling. But she was not utterly beaten. The national feeling was so strong that soon Hungary rose from the abyss and under Horthy restored the old kingdom on the banks of the Theiss. On November 16, 1919, the national army entered Pest which the Roumanians had evacuated; on February 16, 1920, the National Assembly made Horthy regent without abandoning monarchy as the state form, and on November 13, 1920, bowed, while maintaining her claims, to the treaty which forced the old kingdom into a Procrustes bed between the new states created at Versailles. The political and economic dismemberment of the Danube basin was complete and what was left of the Hungarian state was confined to the Danube–Theiss area.

At Versailles the Magyars were not only forced back to their original possessions but had to leave important fragments of their nation under foreign domination. No longer were they established on the Carpathians and the Transylvanian forests where once they kept guard against Turks and Tartars; they lost Slovakia which their kings had once abandoned to the Silesian Slav tribes; they were driven out of the Banat and out of Croatia, where in the XIVth century they had erected a military barrier which held out against the attack of the Ottomans for more than a century; they were deprived of an outlet to the sea and lost Fiume, which Maria Teresa in 1779 had transferred to the Hungarian crown as *corpus separatum;* they were driven back into their shut-in central plain without being able to keep its entrances locked.

German Austria lost much, Hungary practically everything. The coal seams of Siebenbürgen, the mineral deposits of the Banat, communication with the Adriatic and practically all its forests were lost. Of 325,400 square kilometres, no fewer

than 232,900 square kilometres were taken away ; her population fell from 13,000,000 to 8,200,000. Her frontiers to-day have a total length of about 1,500 kilometres. Of these 300 kilometres are shared with the Roumanians ; 500 kilometres with the Czechs and 500 kilometres with the Jugoslavs. The encirclement is practically complete and the powerful impetus to expansion seems broken. But it would be an error to draw conclusions as to Hungary's future on that assumption. The Magyars will neither disappear from the map nor remain in this state of inferiority, nor content themselves permanently with the alms thrown to them.

The military history of Hungary lets it be plainly seen that the policy of expansion was dictated by the necessity of reaching a strategic frontier on the north, south and east. The state which appears on the Versailles map has no such frontier. The Danube–Theiss plain to which Hungary is confined to-day was intentionally deprived of its natural outlets. The districts round the source and mouth of the Theiss are in hostile possession, and the frontiers of Transylvania are pushed so far into the Theiss basin that the great transversal Szatmar–Grosswardein–Arad–Temesvar is in the hands of the Roumanians. Hungary on the north is overlooked by the Carpathians, on which Poles and Czechs join hands ; in the east is commanded by the Transylvanian plateau on whose western slope the Roumanians stand ready ; on the south she is pressed back from the Save and the mouth of the Drave and in the west she has lost the Burgenland from which runs the way to the Raab. Even the north and south glacis of the Danube area left to her have been taken away, for the Czech holds Komorn and Pressburg and the Jugoslav is at the gates of Mohacz and Szegedin.

The strategic position is determined not by the little isolated range of hills which covered the land from the north and the Fünfkirchen hill country which runs south-eastwards of the Platten lake but by the complete defencelessness of the Theiss basin. But Hungary has not been completely abandoned by fate. She can use her position between the beneficiaries of Versailles despite their superior forces as a flank position effective in any direction. To-day Czechs, Jugoslavs and Roumanians can put in the field 546 battalions, 215 squadrons, 716 batteries and 37 air divisions, but they cannot attack disarmed

Hungary without running into danger. Hungary could be reduced to a torso but it could not be fully destroyed. It cannot be dismissed as a *quantité négligeable*, nor dealt with merely as an object without will of its own.

The Danube area which, in defiance of historical, geographical and economic conditions, was dismembered at Versailles, is to-day more truly bound together by the Hungarian plain than before the World War. To-day Hungary is the central state in that area and as such is self-supporting. Austria has become an Alpine state, Jugoslavia is a Balkan and Adriatic state, Roumania remains bound to the lower valley and the mouth of the river, Czechoslovakia lies separated and divided into two natural areas which have nothing in common—none of them has control of the stream which is the connecting link between them. Neither has Hungary, but it is the typical Danubian state round which the others are grouped and that gives an attractive force to this land founded on an agricultural basis. In this force lies latent political strength. Hungary's connection with the area in which the Magyars settled down to form a state is so intimate that the frontiers settled at Versailles cannot permanently be maintained. When Hungary lost Pressburg, Komorn, Munkacz, Szatmar-Nemety, Grosswardein, Arad, Temesvar and Nagy-Becskerek, was pressed back from the Carpathians, from the north bank of the Danube and the mouth of the Theiss, she was thereby deprived of the natural frontiers of the Theiss–Danube area which even the Versailles dictators could not partition any further. This invasion of the central area is, from the viewpoint of Versailles, not merely an error in construction, but constituted a weakening of the states constructed round it, for the surrounding states are thereby strategically bound together. In that lies weakness, however favourable the position may seem to be.

On three sides Hungary is surrounded by states which were allotted the task of encirclement by France and it shares with Austria and Germany that common destiny which was already admitted in the Xth century and has been emphasised by the Versailles settlement. Hungary's future is closely bound up with that of Germany. That was not the intention of the Versailles statesmen, but it is the result of having so gorged

Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Roumania with the spoils of Hungary that the relations of its neighbours to the oldest Danube state have been radically altered. Hungary's historic mission is not fulfilled if she does not destroy herself.

When the Hungary of Matthias Corvinus became a south-eastern Great Power in the Central European system, a proud dictum went the round of its frontiers and acquired a deeper meaning under the Turkish yoke. It expressed in a phrase the originality and significance of the Magyar state: "*Nulla vita extra Hungariam.*" In Roumanian Siebenbürgen and in the Banat live to-day 2,000,000 Magyars; in Czechoslovakia, 750,000; in Jugoslavia, 490,000, who, under a foreign yoke, more fervently than ever profess that ancient creed.

CHAPTER XI

GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICS IN ROUMANIA

Although the destiny of Transylvania has been intimately connected with that of Moldavia, of Wallachia and of the Bukovina, its centre of gravity has always been west and not east of the Carpathians. The century and a half subordination to Turkey is no proof to the contrary, since Turkey ruled not in virtue of its possession of Wallachia but in virtue of its domination of the whole Danube front and especially by its advance on the line Belgrade–Budapest. To-day the relations of Transylvania to the Moldavian–Wallachian plain have been completely reversed. The Versailles settlement placed Siebenbürgen, the Banat, Bessarabia, and all the Dobrudja within Roumania and, as everywhere else, disregarded the laws of geography.

The Wallachian plain is certainly not a separate natural feature but it is not connected with Siebenbürgen ; it seems rather a continuation of the eastern steppe and as such is intimately connected with the plateau which stretches from the Balkans to the south bank of the Danube. The area between the Transylvanian Alps and the Balkans is given unity by the river of which it is made accessible. Yet this well-marked natural unity has never been the centre of a kingdom ; it has always been dominated by Powers lying beyond its frontiers, or divided between rulers on the north bank and on the south.

The first nations in history who clashed between the Balkans and the Carpathians were the Scythians and the Persians. The campaign of Darius shows plainly the three characteristics of the historical movement in the Roumano-Bulgarian lands. It shows the country between the Balkans, the Carpathians and the Black Sea to be a military highway, as destined to be ruled by Powers outside it and that if the claimants to its possession clash between the Carpathians and the Black Sea the problem of its control can be solved by partition. The control of the Danube banks from a centre outside their area depends on control of the flanking lines which by land led to Vidin and

Belgrade, and by sea from the Bosporus to the Dniester. Romans, Byzantines and Turks all realised this strategic principle; all came from the south and ruled the Danube valley from a distant base.

The fact that the land between the Carpathians and the Balkans has never become a centralised kingdom is emphasised by the history of Wallachia, which only became the seat of the Roumanian state when it was joined to Moldavia, and so far from extending its rule across the Carpathians was itself ruled from the mountains when the fortunes of war smiled on a valley chieftain. The Versailles settlement demands that the centre of gravity of the Roumanian state be transferred from the plain to the Transylvanian plateau.

The first Carpatho-Wallachian state is lost in the darkness of the period of the Celtic migrations. It first emerges into the light when, in the first century B.C., it became supreme among its neighbours and under Boerebistas was formidable to Rome. It stretched from the eastern Alps to the Balkans, and constituted perhaps the only attempt in history to include in one kingdom the Danube basin from the Adriatic gates to the Dobrudja. But it is not from Boerebistas that we receive the first lesson, but from Decebalus who, in the reigns of Domitian and Trajan, ruled the Maros valley. The Romans had long ere this reached the Save and the Danube and had been on the defensive for half a century. Then they saw their Danubian provinces so threatened by the Geto-Dacian kingdom of Decebalus that they had to resume the offensive in order to secure the entrances to Italy and the Balkan peninsula by the conquest of the strategic central area of Siebenbürgen. This was the last Roman expansion towards the centre of the Continent.

The capital of Decebalus was in the Hatzeg valley on the north slopes of the Vulkan mountains. He was the first to recognise the strategic unity of the Danube–Theiss basin with Siebenbürgen and to rule simultaneously from the Transylvanian plateau the Hungarian plain, Wallachia and the northern entrances to the Balkan peninsula. Three Roman campaigns against this strong position failed, and if Trajan had not bridged the Danube at Orsova, he would never have been able to force his way into it. When after severe fighting he

conquered the Geto-Dacian kingdom the last of the barbarian kingdoms in the Danube valley collapsed, and the province of Dacia took their place; Roman colonists flocked into the country, mixed with the Geto-Dacian population, and filled Siebenbürgen and Wallachia with new life.

For a century Dacia was a flourishing province of the Roman empire and then the Germans from Galicia and the Bukovina broke through its fortified frontier. Aurelian drove them back but determined to abandon Transylvania and make the steep banks of the Danube the defensive frontier. He left the Theiss valley, Siebenbürgen and Wallachia to the Goths, settled the retreating colonists in Moesia and put the Danube line in a state of defence. Nevertheless, the evacuated territory remained inhabited by a Romanised population. The survivors of the Daco-Romans took refuge in the Marmaros and the natural fortress of Siebenbürgen and let the storm of the great migrations pass by them. When the East Goths crossed the Danube and won the north glacis of the Balkan range, Dacia passed out of the " inhabited world " of antiquity.

Only when the steppe was exhausted and the amorphous mass of the invading peoples began to organise itself in the VIIIth century in the Danube area, was the direction of expansion fixed by conquerors who had abandoned nomadism and had settled in the plain of the Theiss and the great Balkan valleys. Moldavia, Wallachia and the Dobrudja took on a new appearance. The relics of the old romanised population concentrated in Moldavia and on the south slope of the Transylvanian Alps, but the concentration was not strong enough to permit of the formation of states of their own. For a moment an early Russian foundation of Varangian stamp appeared on the Lower Danube; for a period the Danube Bulgars held the leading position, and at the end of the Xth century created a great empire between the Balkans and the Carpathians on the south bank of the Danube and then once again Powers lying outside it settled the destiny of the great plain from bases on the Theiss and the Bosporus. The Hungarians took up the ideal of Decebalus and advanced their frontier line across the Carpathians to the north bank of the Danube while they ruled Wallachia from Siebenbürgen; the Byzantines advanced into the Dobrudja, on the Balkans and

in the Morava valley and reached the Danube along the whole line from Belgrade to the Black Sea. At Belgrade the Serbo-Croats resisted them; at Nicopolis the Magyars crossed the river and threw them back after severe fighting to the Balkan passes. Under cover of this great frontier struggle, small Wallachian principalities led a semi-independent existence. First in the XIVth century did the Wallachs emerge from obscurity.

The voivode Bassarab subdued the local princelets and drove the Magyar king, Robert of Anjou, back over the mountains. A generation later Mirceo, the first Wallach ruler of royal stature, crossed the Danube, conquered the Dobrudja, and not without success defended himself against the Ottomans advancing from Adrianople. On these battle-fields Roumanian history first acquires definiteness. Between the Transylvanian Alps and the Balkan north glacis a native kingdom rose to individual existence. When the Patriarch of Constantinople yielded to the popular desires in regard to the Wallachian church, the outlines of a Daco-Roman state mixed with Slav elements became visible on the Wallachian plain.

At the same period, the voivode Bogdan made himself master of Moldavia and extended his power over the Sereth and the Pruth to the Bessarabian steppe. He lived more securely than the voivode of Wallachia, for he had his castle in the Marmaros on the distant source of the Theiss and on the heights of the Carpathians, and so dominated the Sereth and the Pruth from the flank, while the Wallach was involved in a frontal struggle on the southern slopes and the plain. Both fought on two fronts, the Moldavian against Hungary and Poland, the Wallach against Hungary and Turkey. Both suffered from the geographical position, which became the more decisive in proportion as strong Powers were formed on the Bosporus and across the Dnieper.

The fate of Wallachia was already decided at the end of the XIVth century. Mirceo was involved in the defeat of Sigismund at Nicopolis and submitted to the Ottoman. Then victory at Nicopolis won for the Turks the Balkan peninsula up to the Danube and made the Transylvanian Alps the frontier of western Europe. Wallachia became a Turkish glacis. The fall of Constantinople sealed its fate. Forced to fight

against Hungary and Turkey, Roumania's war with the former ended in domination by the latter. The Moldavian princes shared the fate of their Wallachian kinsmen, but in their flank position they were able to defend themselves in the Marmaros and on the Sereth much longer, because the Turks, advancing from the south, had to overcome the Wallachs before attacking the Moldave-Polish front. The Moldavian principality had justly appreciated its geographical position and in 1387 Jagello did homage to the Polish king, Vladislav II, in order to extend his power south-eastwards over the Bessarabian steppe. When Stephan the Great in the latter half of the XVth century extended his rule to the Black Sea, and drove back the Turks, the leadership passed to the Moldavians, but they could not escape the fate ordained by geography. The crossing of the Pruth had fatal consequences. In 1511 Suleiman compelled Peter Raresch to give up Bessarabia, created a Turkish military province on the Black Sea coast, and built strong fortresses at Chotin and Bender. The Moldavian principality lost the bases of its power and collapsed.

Both Moldavia and Wallachia fell victims to their hybrid position between east and west. They succumbed because they left the Carpathians and advanced across the Danube and the Pruth before they had become conscious of their homogeneousness and of their inseparability from the Carpathian corner position.

When Michael the Brave, at the end of the XVIth century, wished to make good this omission and for a brief period united under his rule Moldavia, Wallachia and Siebenbürgen, it was too late to renew the bases of the Moldavian-Wallachian power. Michael defeated the claimant to Transylvania, Andreas Báthory, at Hermannstadt, but saw himself soon faced with a revolt of the Saxons and could not crush it. In vain he appealed to Turkey for aid. He was overpowered and was executed as a traitor by the Imperialist leader, George Basta. The first attempt to rule the plains from Siebenbürgen had failed.

This tragic episode helps to the comprehension of the whole Roumanian problem. It is reminiscent of the first empire of Decebalus who, like Michael, based his power on possession of the plateau, and it is a bloody commentary on the Versailles

settlement in virtue of which Siebenbürgen and Bessarabia are part of Roumania.

This problem of the creation of a Carpatho-Wallachian power was approached in different ways by the old Geto-Dacian kingdom, by the *baroque* creation of Michael, and by the Versailles settlement. Decebalus extended his power from the plateau over the surrounding plains ; Michael sought to place the centre of gravity again on the plateau ; the new Roumania seeks to rule Siebenbürgen and Bessarabia from the Danube–Sereth plain. The descent is perceptible. The geographical arrangement is weaker and the power of action is lessened. The Getic chief created his realm by its native strength and succumbed only when Trajan put in the field against him the resources of the Roman Empire ; Michael used the favourable circumstances of the moment when he conquered distracted Moldavia and with the help of the Turks broke into Siebenbürgen, but contemporary Roumania was defeated in the World War and received her new possessions from foreign hands. Thereby she has to maintain three fronts and has completely altered her geographical position. She takes a strategic central area from Hungary, the strategic flank communications from the Russians and the Bulgars. That is too much, and she will never reap the benefit of such conquests. The frontiers of Hungary, Russia and Bulgaria, in obedience to geographical law, will in the future be advanced against her on three sides. The heaviest pressure will fall on Moldavia on her Russian flank, since this is by nature an offensive one and has been shown to be such by the history of the last two centuries.

A new epoch in the history of Roumania began in 1710 when the policy of Peter the Great of Russia summoned the Christian subjects of the Sultan to the field against the Turks and drew the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia into its orbit. The struggle for the possession of the military highways of south-eastern Europe meant a struggle of Austria and Russia with Turkey for supremacy in the Balkans. The Danubian principalities lay between two fires, but were not seriously menaced, and compelled to take sides till the middle of the XVIIIth century. They decided that the maintenance of Turkish sovereignty was preferable to the creation of a Russian

protectorate, and this conception dominated Roumanian policy till far into the XIXth century.

When Catherine II, in the 'sixties of the XVIIIth century, attacked Turkey by sea and by land and from north and south the strategic position of Roumania was changed. Moldavia became the battlefield of the east and Wallachia the advanced section of the Russian base of operations in the struggle for the Balkans. The Porte resumed possession of the principalities and of Bessarabia by the Treaty of Kütchük-Kainardji, but it was compelled to renunciations which left the game in Russia's hands. Nevertheless, the Turks were able to maintain their waning sovereignty for more than fifty years longer because the Greek princes sent from the Phanar did not surrender themselves blindly to Russia but looked after their own interests. The Phanariots, in alliance with the native nobility, exploited the land to the utmost of their power, but they did not reject the sovereignty of the Sultan, and so gave the cause of Greece a powerful external base on the Sereth and the Danube. In the course of the next few years the Russians became more and more the protectors of the principalities, held Moldavia for years in their possession, annexed Bessarabia in 1812, and in 1829 were recognised as the legal protectors of Moldavia and Wallachia. From being military highways, the principalities became the military frontier of Russia. The Russian advance on Constantinople was prepared in Moldavia. Then in the Crimean War the Western Powers struck at the vulnerable Black Sea flank and compelled Russia to retreat.

As a result, the principalities were freed from Russian domination and Russia was compelled to restore West Bessarabia to Moldavia. We see the beginnings of a Roumanian state. Napoleon III now brought forward the principle of nationalities in favour of the Italians and Roumanians in order to surround France again with client states, and threatened Austria with war. The Roumanians read the signs of the times correctly. Moldavia and Wallachia in the early spring of 1859 in quick succession elected Alexander Cuza hospodar, and this prepared the union of the two countries and greeted the new hospodar as Prince of Roumania. The protest of the Sultan was drowned by the cannon of Magenta and Solferino. Seven years later, under the ægis of Napoleon, Roumania

elected as prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. Russia, Austria and Turkey saw the fate of the principalities decided by an external power.

When in 1877 Russia resumed the advance on Constantinople, Roumania's destiny was again settled by war. Russia could not this time proceed with her advance till she had signed a treaty guaranteeing the integrity of Roumania. Shortly after Prince Carol proclaimed the full independence of his country in order to complete the liberation of Roumania under cover of Russian policy, but no longer in Russia's interests. Roumania entered on the stage of European politics as a Power with full liberty of action and a few months later was called upon to play the warrior's part.

When the Russian army of the Danube lay hemmed in on the north glacis of the Balkans between the fortified rectangle Rustchuk–Shumla–Silistria–Varna and the earthworks of Plevna, Prince Carol appeared as saviour. He led his Roumanians across the Danube, at the head of the Russo-Roumanian besiegers forced Plevna to capitulate, captured Vidin and Rabova, and opened to the Tsar the way to Adrianople. Roumanian statesmanship had won its first triumph. In 1877 Roumania could refuse neither the Russian alliance nor the appeal of the Tsar, but she kept her worth as an ally and at Plevna won a European position. She obtained it to the great dissatisfaction of Russia, whose policy did not desire a strong Roumania on the glacis of the Balkan peninsula. Russia and Roumania were not natural allies but natural opponents. Roumania barred the way to Constantinople and separated Russia from the Bulgars and Serbs who were bound to Russia by the pan-Slavist idea and if, supported by Austria and Germany, it drew up its armies at the foot of the Carpathians, it possessed a political flank position on which Russia could not longer move past without setting in motion all Central Europe.

At the Congress of Berlin Roumania again lost Bessarabia and as compensation the Powers assigned the Dobrudja to the principality, now become a kingdom. The exchange had for object a fundamental geographical position to which Russia, Roumania and Bulgaria simultaneously laid claim. We are at the most dangerous point of the area of conflict in the north-

eastern Balkans in which Roumania has become even more deeply involved than before the World War. The acquisition of the Dobrudja made Roumania the historic foe of Bulgaria.

Looking at the general history of Europe, we see Roumania since 1859 playing a part full of strange contradictions. The new Daco-Roumanian state appears from the ethnic point of view as a continuance of the Hungarian state which severs north Slavs from south Slavs, and as such it functioned until the Anglo-French preparations for a World War loosed the links that bound it. Roumania left the side of Austria and the Central Powers to join the outlying Powers in order to resume on a monumental scale the policy of Michael the Brave.

From the Berlin Congress to that of Algeciras the position of Roumania was a Central European one. As long as Bismark held Europe in equilibrium, Roumania adhered to the Triple Alliance. Only when his successors shifted the scales and the *Entente cordiale* took shape did Roumania fall back on herself. Although King Carol had made a dynastic alliance with Wilhelm II and Francis Joseph by which Roumania was a member of the Central European coalition, he never laid it before Parliament, and saw with anxiety the increase of the Russo-French influence in his country. The Balkan equilibrium so painfully created at Berlin in order to preserve the European equilibrium was no longer maintained. Each time the Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks rose and demanded a greater portion of the peninsula, Roumania's fate also was at stake.

Roumania's course was first visibly changed when the *Entente cordiale* was strengthened in 1908 by the meeting at Reval between Edward VII and the Tsar. The Bosnian crisis in which dying Austria won its last triumph showed Roumania the power of the Triple Alliance and the sympathy between Russia and the Slav states of the Balkans, but Roumanian policy was no longer free to choose its course, for the web of alliances and interests was so complicated that, wedged in between Russia, Austria-Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria, she felt herself drawn in every direction.

Then came the Balkan War. Roumania stayed inactive while Bulgars, Serbs, Montenegrins and Greeks advanced on Salonika and Constantinople. She did not wish to share in a war which was being waged far from her frontiers. Once

Bulgaria had become independent, there was no more hope for Roumania of securing Turkish territory for herself. The Kutzo-Vlachs, a fragment of the Roumanian nation, which even in Aurelian's time had been driven to Macedonia, were now inextricably mixed with Greeks, Bulgars and Serbs, and no liberation was possible for them by a Daco-Roumanian national state. There was nothing else for Roumania to do but accept the consequences of her outlying position and press closer to the Carpathian wall and once again seek support from Austria and Germany so as not to be overrun if the Russians suddenly marched on the Danube. But Russia did not march. The European system of alliances no longer permitted an individual Power to embark on war without upsetting the whole Continent and, as far as the *Entente* Powers were concerned, the Balkan War offered no inducement to break the peace.

But Roumania had good fortune. The development of the conflict enabled her to play a decisive rôle. When the victorious allies quarrelled over the division of the spoils and went to war, Roumania, in the knowledge that her rear was protected by Austria, intervened and demanded Silistria and the southern Dobrudja in order to influence the new distribution of power in the Balkans and not have to acknowledge a settlement made without her. In this step a complete change of front was foreshadowed for, this time of her own choice, Roumania pressed more deeply into the old Daco-Moesian area while she recklessly turned Bulgaria's difficulties to her own advantage and so created a deep gulf between herself and her southern neighbour. But the step succeeded. It could not but succeed if Russia took no action, for the Bulgarians were no longer able to oppose the Roumanian advance.

Had Roumania entered the war only to share in the booty, her intervention would have deserved no praise. But Roumanian statesmanship had bigger ideas than that. Roumania halted her army three days' march from Sofia, imposed a general armistice and compelled the hostile states, now weakened by the war against the Turks and against each other, to sign a general peace at Bucharest on August 10, 1913. This was the greatest moment in the young state's history, but it was also the last in which Roumania acted relying on the Car-

pathians. On that day she left the Central European sphere in order to take up a centralised flank position between the two great European coalitions. As this position did not correspond to the strategic circumstances which demanded either union with the Central Powers or entry into the front of the outlying states, Roumania was in a hybrid position which had meaning only if it was to serve as cover for the passage of Roumania into the camp of the *Entente cordiale*.

Three years later that passage was completed when, in the World War, the Russians climbed the Carpathians and threatened to advance on Budapest. Roumania thought she had again preserved her strength for the moment which promised the greatest gains for a Power belatedly entering the war. The death of King Carol made the way smooth for the partisans of the *Entente*. The Great Powers had already been at grips for two years; for a year Bulgaria had been at war on the Vardar in alliance with the Central Powers, when Roumania prepared to march against Siebenbürgen and the Marmaros in order to conquer the old Getic lands in the Dacia of Trajan, and following in the track of Bassarab and Michael the Brave, win the strategic watchtower which, from the inner flank, commands the Danube–Sereth plain.

Not lightheartedly did the Bratianu Cabinet involve Roumania in the war. Only when Verdun held out against the German attack, when the Austrians were summoned from their attack on Asiago to repair the disaster of Lutsk, and when the Battle of the Somme had thrown the Germans on a difficult defensive, did Bucharest begin to think seriously of a great campaign by the side of the *Entente* Powers. Bratianu had certainly decided not to let a war which brought Austria nearer to destruction end before he had drawn the sword, but there was more attraction in simply arriving in time to divide the spoils than in fighting a war for existence. The happy chance of the Balkan War was not repeated; Roumania had to fight.

The moment to take the risk came in August 1916. But Roumania delayed. The price which the *Entente* was willing to pay appeared not high enough to the Roumanians, accustomed to good fortune. They sought not only the satisfaction of political ambitions and the provision of military material but also direct military support. Bratianu declared

that Roumania would not advance so long as the Bulgars could fall on her rear. If it was impossible by diplomacy to separate Bulgaria from the Central Powers, then the *Entente* forces at Salonika must be so reinforced that they could undertake a strategic offensive that would pin the Bulgarians to the last battalion to the Vardar. When the Western Powers delayed to launch an offensive on the Vardar which would have involved a weakening of the western front and the uncovering of Egypt, Bratianu refused to enter the war at the date fixed. In vain did Russia promise to lighten the task of the Roumanian command by the despatch of several divisions to the Dobrudja and by an attack on Bulgaria's north flank. Bratianu's objectives were not in the south but in the north. The plan of campaign provided for an invasion of Siebenbürgen while remaining on the defensive on the Danube and in the Dobrudja. In the former area lay her political objectives, and there, in the judgment of her leaders, and perhaps also of her allies, easy victory was to be won. Let the Army of the East accomplish the task of holding the Bulgarians to their front, let the Russians send warships to the Bulgarian coast or use the land-bridge of the Dobrudja to attack Bulgaria with Roumanian support, and so induce her to abandon her allies—these operations Roumania would not make her own but, as far as Bulgaria was concerned, would remain disinterested in order to prosecute the war as a war of nationalities against Austria-Hungary.

This policy found its strongest expression in the demand of Bratianu that the *Entente* should not make peace until the Roumanian aspirations in Habsburg territory had been realised. As Bratianu obstinately held to his point, the Western Powers gave in and guaranteed Roumania the Banat and Siebenbürgen in the case of a successful end to the war, even if she had not quite succeeded in conquering them. When the Bulgars anticipated the Salonika army's offensive and themselves assumed the offensive on the Vardar and on the Struma, Bratianu rightly considered that the Bulgarian army was sufficiently occupied and declared war on August 27, 1916, having kept the Central Powers in uncertainty to the end.

Roumania put four armies into the field. One with some Russian divisions stood in the Dobrudja as a flank guard

against the Bulgars ; three, confident of victory, climbed the slopes of the Carpathians to strike the Austro-Hungarian army on its exposed flank and roll it up in the direction of Szatmar. The line Kronstadt–Klausenburg–Debreczin was already assigned to the connecting Russian corps as line of advance. It happened otherwise. The defence of the Dobrudja and the attack on Siebenbürgen ended in disaster and the defensive flank in the Dobrudja was driven in in a fortnight. On October 9th Germans and Austrians stood victorious on the Transylvanian Alps ; on October 14th they broke through the line Cernavoda–Constanza ; on November 17th the German 9th army stormed the Vulkan Pass ; on November 24th Mackensen, advancing from the Dobrudja, forced the crossing of the Danube ; and on December 2nd the two armies together decisively defeated the main Roumanian army on the Arges before the gates of Bucharest.

It was not a crushing defeat, but the situation was by it completely changed. While Russians and Roumanians were driven to the Sereth and dug themselves in in the region Focsani–Braila as the extreme southern flank of the Russian front which stretched north to the Gulf of Riga, Roumania completed the strategic reversal of front which took her from the area of operations in Central Europe to secure herself in the Bessarabian zone and to exchange her broken flank position for a refuge from which the line of retreat ran outwards to the east. She ceased at that hour to be a Balkan state and sacrificed her independent position, which she had once obtained in face of Russia, to strategic subordination to Russia's power. Had not Russia fallen to pieces in the chaos of the Communist Revolution before the course of the World War turned in favour of the outlying Powers, Roumania would not have been " restored " as she was at Versailles, but would have been driven from Bessarabia and from the Dniester delta back to the Danube. From this she was saved by the Russian Revolution.

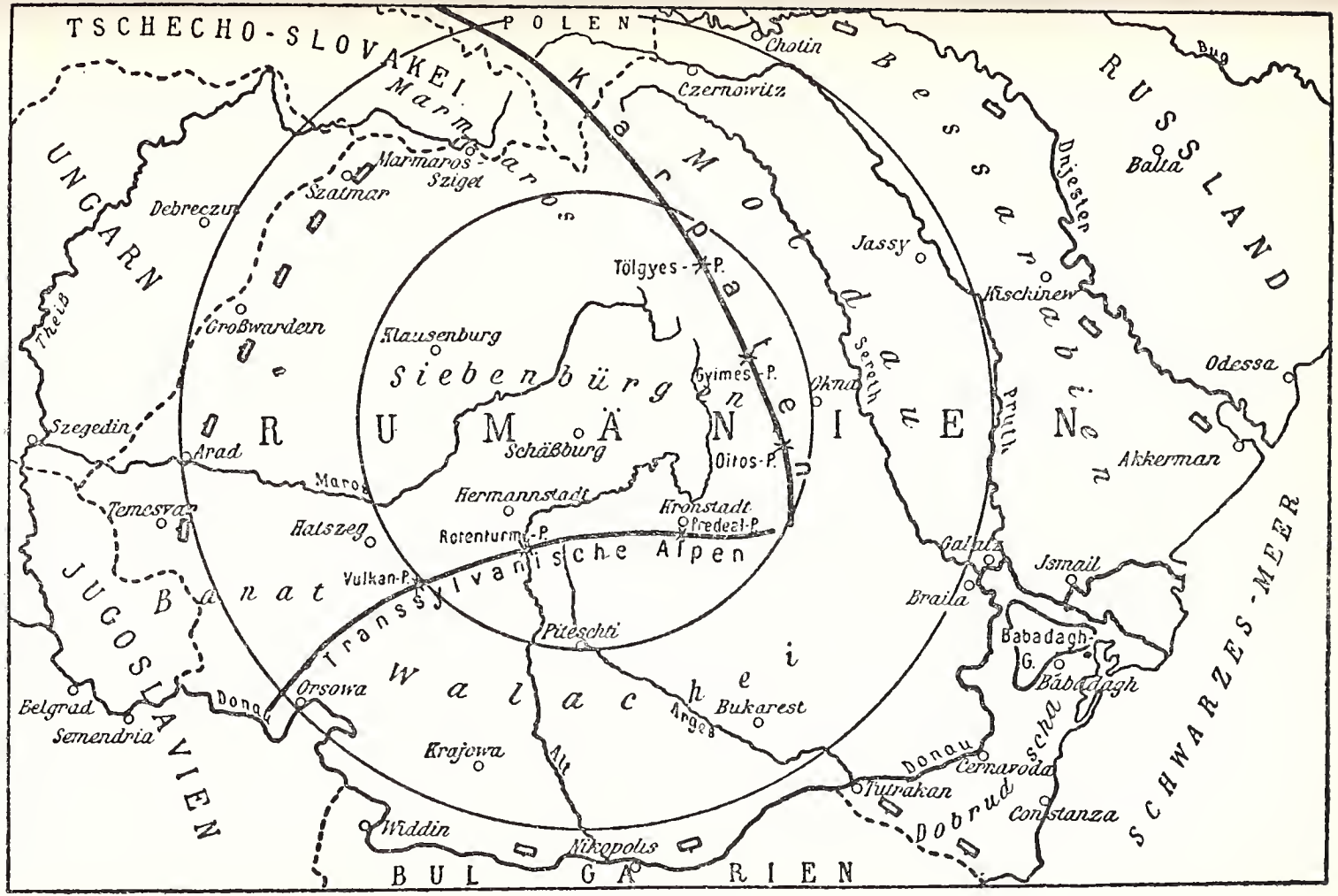
At the moment, however, she lost both the Dobrudja and the crests of the Transylvanian Alps and was compelled to disband eight divisions of her army, but remained in the expectancy of receiving Bessarabia. The preliminary peace was signed at Buftea on March 8, 1918, and the final peace at

Bucharest on May 7th, but the Roumanians delayed ratification till the wheel came round again.

A few months later, Roumania appeared at Versailles among the victors and simultaneously reaped her harvest in six fields. She did not lose Bessarabia after all, and she gained the Dobrudja, the Bukovina, the Marmaros, Siebenbürgen, and a portion of the Banat. As Italy once obtained unity and expansion after defeat, so Roumania, as a result of lost campaigns, obtained the fulfilment of her extravagant national ambitions. This land, once a military highway, now was master of all the hills, passages, valleys and land-bridges of this multiform area in which the Geto-Dacians had once settled and now as dominant nation ruled Bulgars, Ruthenians, Magyars and Germans.

Great Roumania conceived as a nationalities state is actually an imperial state. The Roumanians who on October 8, 1916, were driven in rout from Siebenbürgen, on June 11, 1919, completed the incorporation in their state of the plateau and the Banat, and as conquerors of the Communist Revolution occupied Budapest. When on December 30, 1919, "the union of all the liberated Roumanian territories with the old kingdom" was proclaimed and the war thereby once again was made one for the principle of nationalities, Roumanian statesmen placed this principle above the laws of political geography. Roumania, which in 1912 was in possession of the river area of Wallachia and Moldavia and the Black Sea flank area of Southern Dobrudja and used the mountain range only as a natural flank protection, was suddenly spread out from the Black Sea to the Maros and from the Theiss to the Dniester over three very differing areas and cut in two by an Alpine range. From an area of 138,000 square kilometres, she grew to 316,000 square kilometres; from a population of 7,240,000 increased to one of 17,000,000, with a peace strength army of 250,000 men.

In the World War Roumania carried through a change of front which looks back to a thousand year-old tradition, but the consequent severance of her destinies from those of Central Europe was accomplished in circumstances which were in themselves a warning. She reached a strong flank support in the east, but all that she had there was the power to turn



GREAT ROUMANIA.

against Siebenbürgen and march into the Maros valley without fear of her rear, since Russia was her ally.

That was the case in the autumn of 1916, but the Russians were already beginning the struggle with the Revolution and were only kept in the field by the hope of capturing Constantinople. If Roumania helped them to realise that hope, she placed a foe on her own flank, for the Russians as possessors of Constantinople cannot do without the land-bridge which extends from the Dniester over the Dobrudja to the Bosporus. Fortune helped her in 1918. Both Russia and Roumania were defeated, but the Roumanians, thanks to the Western Powers and America, had their strength renewed while the Russians, in the throes of the Communist revolution, abandoning alike the west and their own Balkan policy, turned their backs on the European state system. The position of Roumania to-day depends not only on the maintenance of the Versailles settlement but on the renunciation by Russia of her old Mediterranean ambitions. Even that renunciation is not enough to secure Roumania's eastern flank, for Russia herself requires for her defence the Bessarabian glacis.

These conditions are so limited in time and space that Roumania cannot hope to find peace. If the shades of Decebalus, Bassarab, Mirceo and Michael the Brave are appealed to, it will be seen that a Daco-Roman empire of this extent lacks inner equilibrium. Decebalus ruled Wallachia and the Banat from the hills, Bassarab and Mirceo ruled in the Danube valley, Michael failed on the plateau when he sought to place the centre of gravity of his realm in Transylvania—none of them overcame the geographical law laid down in the existence of the Transylvanian Alps in the midst of Roumania. Only two world conquerors, Rome and the Turk, have become masters of the entire area in which the Roumanian nation, composed of Getae, Daco-Moesian colonists and Slavs, has established itself; but they ruled it not from its centre, but from the Mediterranean.

When Roumania, a Latin-Slav Great Power, crossed the Carpathians in 1919 she exchanged her defensive position in the plain between the mountain barrier and the Danube for a lofty offensive position and reversed her front, without being in a position to draw the full consequences of the change

and bring the centre of gravity from the valleys of Wallachia over the Carpathians to the Siebenbürgen plateau. Roumania is now a partner in the French continental system and a member of the Little Entente and is compelled by her own expansionist policy to hold the line Szatmar–Némety–Arad–Temesvar as the Roumanian sector of the outer circumvallation of Central Europe, but she can spare only a part of her strength for this extensive position because in Bessarabia and in the Dobrudja she is close up against an enemy. No Power, not even Poland, reposes so little on natural strategic foundations as Great Roumania. Even the old Roumania had better frontiers. The Roumanian base of operations, like Roumanian policy, remains bound to that part of the Danube which lies between the Carpathians and the Balkans. Military operations in Siebenbürgen would be as hampered to-day as in 1916 by the threat to the Roumanian rear.

If Roumania prepared for an advance northward the vulnerable flanks in the east and the south are open to any attack. If to-day there is no longer on the south bank of the Danube an enemy which, supported by Germany, can storm Tutrakan, Topraisar and Constanza, cross the Danube at Sistova and win again the Battle of Arges, yet the defeated Bulgarians still remain an implacable foe. In the east, Russia is strong enough to demand the restoration of Bessarabia, although she cannot yet draw the sword. The mere formulation of the Russian claim is enough to tie Roumania down to her outlying position on the Dniester and the Pruth. She is condemned to defend three extensive fronts. Certainly her possession of Siebenbürgen assures her the possession of the whole, but she is not strong enough to make that region the central fortress of her power. She cannot disinherit Bucharest and Jassy for the sake of Braila. The Transylvanian position is important as being the south-eastern corner of the encirclement of Central Europe, but the policy of Great Roumania finds no real support in it.

To-day the Roumanian sphere of power is a circle whose radius from the circumference to its centre in Schässburg is some 270 kilometres long. The circle includes Siebenbürgen, Moldavia and Wallachia, and its circumference runs through Orsova, Arad, Czernowitz and Galatz and along the courses

of the Danube and the Pruth. Bessarabia and the Dobrudja appear as outlying glacis. But this area has no geographical compactness, for the wall of the Carpathians cuts it in two. One has therefore no alternative but to reduce the radius to 140 kilometres, so outlining the central mountain barrier which prevents the consolidation of the Roumanian power. This smaller circle runs through the Hatzeg valley, Petroseny, Ocna, Campina, the Oitos pass and the gorge of Dorna Vatra. It encloses a mountain position of great natural strength but does not control the regions outside it. Moldavia, Wallachia and the lands in the plain of the Theiss are outside the mountain fortress.

Roumania can use that fortress the less the more closely she is tied to the Bessarabian glacis, which is so far from her base. If the Russians attack, the Roumanians must meet them first on the Dniester on the line Akkerman–Chotin, then on the Pruth on the line Remi–Czernowitz, and finally on the Sereth on the line Focsani–Galatz, and then fight in the river valleys and the slopes of the mountains. If before the onset they retire on their mountain defences, Jassy and Bucharest are open to the enemy. They might be compelled therefore in certain circumstances to entrust the strategic defence of the kingdom to their minorities, a difficult thing for a state which cannot abandon a policy of nationalist imperialism. The partition of Hungary and the deprivation of the Saxons of their rights are problems which cannot be solved by force. It may be that Roumania is strong enough to rob her minorities of their land and their schools, if the League of Nations does not intervene, but it is not able to place its motley, half-barbaric civilisation in the place of the old civilisation which is dying out. Transylvania will be culturally devastated and Roumania thereby estranged completely from the cultural sphere of Central Europe without having taken root in the east. The Russians will always be her superior in this area. No pact, no alliance, no charter, can give security to a land which is by nature made to be a highway and seeks to transform its geographical character while it passes beyond its natural frontiers and cuts itself loose from its natural allies. Roumania will have no joy of her gains at Versailles.

CHAPTER XII

JUGOSLAVS AND BULGARS

JUGOSLAVIA is the strongest of the new states. The heart of the state is right in the centre of it and Old Serbia, which lies amid its mountains in the valley of the Morava, appears to be cast for the rôle of a Balkan Great Power. There is in it a national and civic spirit which fits it for the work of state-building, but to-day a task is set before it which overtops its hills. Besides being threatened because of its change of front, it is also threatened with the arrest and dissipation of its strength by entry into the French hegemonial system. Serbia has advanced the frontiers of her power beyond the Danube, set foot on the banks of the Theiss, the Maros and the Drave, has reached the Dalmatian coast, and won possession of Macedonia, but she is assailed by temptations and dangers which darken the Jugoslav future. Jugoslavia has so broadened the span of her power and dissipated her strength over so wide an area, that the whole edifice trembles at the slightest shock.

The early history of Serbia affords warning at two epochs of the danger of over-extension and dissipation of strength. When Goths, Huns and Avars overflowed the Roman Danubian provinces and the Avars, who were the last of the hordes destined to disappear, left the arena to the Slavs, the Slavic world spread out rapidly to the Böhmerwald and the Julian Alps. The Jugoslavs recoiled from the German eastern marches, turned south-west and in the VIIth century settled in the valleys of the Save and the Morava, and on the eastern shores of the Adriatic. They then divided into Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The Slovenes never rose to greatness. The Croat in the Xth century became the leading Jugoslav state and between the Save and the Adriatic created a kingdom, but in the XIth century yielded to the Hungarians who forced their way through Croatia to the Mediterranean coast. The Serb, who was furthest from the Magyar line of expansion, attained stability. The Jugoslav power coalesced not on the banks of

the continental rivers but on the shores of the Mediterranean. It fell under the influence and rule of Byzantium but soon aspired to higher status. The tribe which gave its name to the Serb nation was still on the banks of the Lim and the Ibar, fighting against the encroaching Bulgars and had in the Zara–Durazzo region established a strong principality. Here was the first centre from which Serbism advanced. In the middle of the Xth century the Serbs were strong enough to halt the Bulgar at the Morava. Soon after they threw off Byzantine domination. In the XIth century Serb princes fought in alliance with the Hungarians against the last return of Byzantium to the Danube and drove the enemy, which was strong at sea, from the hills of Montenegro and Albania to the coast. Prince Michael received the title of king from Gregory VII. The Serb kingdom appears in European history first as a coastal state and, turned away from northern expansion, sought a future in the Mediterranean world.

While the Magyars watered their horses in the Danube, the Unstrut, the Rhine, the Po and the Rhône and overthrew the Wallachs and Croats in the Danube valley, the Serbs consolidated themselves in the Mediterranean sphere and, pressing eastward, sought to occupy the Balkan peninsula. The war for the Balkans entered an imperialist phase in the XIIIth century. The Serbs broke in from the east and Stephan Urosh II overran Macedonia and established himself in Skoplje. The Serb centre of gravity passed from the Dalmatian coasts over the Shardagh and to the Vardar valley. This is the first characteristic change of front of a versatile, ambitious people. But the Serbs did not abandon the Adriatic. They were established in Cattaro, Antivari and Dulcigno, in Skutari and the Black Mountain, and sought methodically to win territory in all directions. In 1346 their expansion culminated in the crowning of Stephan Dushan as Czar of the Serbs and the Greeks. Stephan held Albania, Epirus, Thessaly and South Macedonia and appeared at the gates of Salonika. The Serbian kingdom made ready to take over the heritage of dying Byzantium.

But the kingdom of the sword established by Stephan lacked stability. When his iron hand was removed, the princelings quarrelled among themselves and broke up a kingdom that

had been inspired by the dream of Balkan hegemony. The wide-flung arch of its power collapsed. The strategic double front was not strong enough to hold back the Turk in the east, where he was carrying all before him, nor the Venetians in the west in their assault as heirs of Byzantium on the coast lands. South Macedonia was lost, the coast towns of Dalmatia were taken, the Serb power, seriously defeated on both fronts, recoiled northwards on Novawies. For the third time the centre of gravity was changed, this time to the banks of the Morava.

In the Morava valley, astride the great diagonal which connects the Balkan peninsula with Continental Europe and constitutes the strategic connecting line between Central Europe and the Dardanelles, the last and most tenacious Serb kingdom was firmly fixed. The Jugoslavs had been forced back on a central position. They would not have maintained themselves there had not support come to them first from Hungary and then from the Austria of Eugène. Austria and Hungary preserved Serbism on the Morava from destruction by the sword of the Ottoman.

The second epoch of Serb history knows nothing of a shifting of the centre of gravity. Closely concentrated, the Morava Serbs grouped round Krusevac, Uzice, Belgrade and Pozarevac and in the Ibar valley. In 1389 the change from Macedonia and Dalmatia to the Morava valley was sealed in blood. The Serbs from the Morava and the Ibar met Murad I at Kossovo before the gates of North Serbia under their prince Lazar and fought a battle which lives eternally in the memory of the nation. The Serbs fought heroically. Murad was killed, Bajazet, his son, snatched victory from a half-lost field and revenged his loss on the captured Serb princes. But at the price of recognising Turkish suzerainty the son of Lazar maintained himself in his principality. Like the Wallach prince Mirceo he sought the support of the northern Powers and awaited freedom. It approached when Bajazet I went down at Angora in 1402 before the Tartar onrush. Then the Serb prince shook off Turkish domination. He joined Sigismund of Hungary and took the title of despot from the Byzantine emperor in order to establish his position in the western Greek world. Once again the Serbs advanced to the Adriatic

and deprived Venice of the coast at Budua and Antivari, but the centre of gravity remained in the Serb hills, round the mouth of the Morava and the Bosnian plateau. George Brankovitch, the nephew of Stephan Lazarevitch, ruled from the Danube to the Adriatic and, supported by Hungary, bade defiance to the Turks on the Shardagh until Murad II brought the entire strength of his realm against him in 1439. Brankovitch retired to Hungary and four years later Vladislav brought him back to Serbia. Brankovitch sought to preserve his power by abandoning the defeated Hunyadi and imprisoning the Magyar hero after his defeat at Kossovo. It was his last treacherous attempt to maintain himself between the Powers. It ended in subjection to the Turks who burst through the barrier of the Morava, and in 1459 stormed the last Serb capital, Semendria.

The Morava kingdom was lost. The Serbs had been deprived of the third, last, and most important centre of their power. When Mohammed II, in 1463, crossed the Ibar and conquered Bosnia, the Serbs were no longer capable of resistance in the Danube–Save region, and when Suleiman in 1529 stormed Belgrade and as ally of France invaded Austria, Serbia lay defenceless beneath his feet. The second period of Serb history had ended. Serbia disappeared for three centuries under the shadow of the Ottoman.

Military history gives the divisions of the history of the Turkish rule. Numerous campaigns were fought in the Morava valley and were brought to a standstill under the walls of Belgrade. The fortress changed hands time and again. When the Imperialists recaptured the bridge of the west in 1688 and in their bold advance reached Prizrend and Skoplje without securing their lines of communication, many Serbs bands fought in their ranks. The reaction under the Grand Vizier, Mustafa Kuprulu, who drove the Austrians back over the Danube, was the ruin of the Morava valley. Great sections of the people fled from Turkish vengeance to South Hungary. When Prince Eugène recaptured Belgrade for the second time, North Serbia became an Austrian glacis. Organised for war and divided for strategic purposes, the Serbian outpost region towards the south round Belgrade, Semendria, Lazarevac and Kragujevac became an autonomous frontier

zone. In 1737 it was overrun by the Turks and by the Peace of Belgrade of 1739 returned to Turkey by Austria, but the impulse to a Serbian renaissance had been given. It had shown again where the centre of gravity of Serbia lay so long as the Serbs sought to realise Balkan aims with the support of Central European Powers.

Of the three great valleys of the continental north half of the Balkan peninsula the first became the cradle of the Serb state, the second of the Roumanian and the third of the Bulgarian, whenever the strength of the Ottoman conqueror began to wane in the struggles with Austria, Hungary and Russia, and the Christian population began to remember its past. Roumania grew out of the Danube lowlands, Bulgaria out of the Maritza valley, Serbia out of the Morava region. The resurrection took place in narrower areas than the foundation of the states in the early middle ages.

The Serbs of the Morava and the Ibar took the lead. Croatia-Slavonia in the XVIIIth century still lay in the rear of the southward-looking Serbia. The Austria of Eugène was strong enough to hold fast the Jugoslav elements that had turned to it but could not win the soul of the Serb. All the Serbs turned their eyes to Moscow and as early as 1705 begged the protection of the Tsar against the Imperial rule. When the Tsar called the Christian peoples to war against the Turks the Serbs responded first. Eugène's victories made no change; the Slavs fought under Austria's banners for their own ends. Three times in the XVIIIth century did war sweep the Morava valley, three times were the Turks victorious. So long as the Turk held the land or was able to carry out counter-attacks that carried the terror of his name across the Danube, the Serbs' war of liberation was bound up with the protection of their frontal position. When the French Revolution turned Austria's attention to the Low Countries the Porte had lost the Crimea and the mouth of the Dniester, but retained Serbia. Now, however, it had no longer the strength to protect itself against internal dissolution and let pashas and janissaries rule the Christian people as they pleased. The Serbs rose in 1804 in the first politically organised revolt. They feigned to act for the Sultan against the janissaries and captured Belgrade from the latter. When Alexander I was

defeated by Napoleon at Austerlitz, left the west-European theatre of war and withdrew to the Polish theatre in order to march against the northern frontiers of Turkey under cover of the Carpathians and seek compensation in a Turkish war, the success of the daring rising seemed assured. The Serbs seized their chance and threw themselves into Russia's arms. The rebellion against the misuse of power became a war for freedom, but its success was of short duration. When in the year of destiny, 1812, Alexander signed the Peace of Bucharest in order to reach a decision in the historic war with the Napoleonic empire, he imposed the condition that the Porte should grant an amnesty and autonomy to the Serbs, but the war of Titans in Europe cast its shadow over the treaty and cancelled its provisions. The Porte disregarded it and ordered things at its own pleasure, Khurshid Pasha renewed the war with Serbia, burst into the Morava valley, and recaptured Belgrade. Voivodes and insurgents fled across the Danube to Austrian territory and again hid themselves from the victor's vengeance. Only one of the Serb leaders, Milosch Obrenovitch of Uzice, remained. He found favour with Khurshid, was recognised as prince, received Rudnik and Kragujevac, parleyed and fought, fought and parleyed with his suzerain, rose to be prince, and after Russia's appearance before Adrianople united in 1830 the Morava valley and the Timok valley under his despotic rule. Serbia arose out of servitude as a protectorate of Russia and the Porte and through all the complications of European politics, moved on towards autonomy and finally to national independence.

The pan-Slav movement was still a matter of religion and sentiment when the pan-Serb movement acquired definite political meaning. The Serbs of the Morava and the Ibar, of Macedonia and Montenegro came closer together. When, in 1862, the Porte was compelled to evacuate its last fortress in Serbia, the suzerainty of the Sultan was a mere appearance, and when, in 1875, the Montenegrins rose in a decisive war for independence and the Bulgars took the field, North Serbia declared herself completely independent. From the Timok to the Adriatic the country rose. But once again North Serbia received the Turkish invasion which developed from Vidin to Nish and in a double attack won the line of the Timok and the

Morava valley. The Turks emerged from the Morava valley, took Alexinac and marched plundering and burning on Krusevac. The intervention of Russia saved the Serbs from extinction. They had been severely handled, but their strength was not broken. Their political ambition and their national energy impelled them in the next years to new action.

When the Berlin Congress made the Oriental question a European matter, the Serbs were given a territory that neither pleased great-Serbian ambitions nor gave satisfaction to old historic claims. From that day dates the beginning of that expansion policy which found permanent expression in the advance along the old historical lines towards the west, south-west and south-east, and in the ease with which the political centre of gravity could be changed from the Danube to the Vardar, from the Vardar to the Adriatic, and from the Adriatic to the Save. From that day, too, dates the consolidation of the pan-Slav sentiment to a political community of interests between Russia and Serbia. Protector and protected were united in an alliance to which the fate of Europe was tied, for it was directed immediately against the Balkan position of the Dual Monarchy and ultimately to its dissolution. When as mandatory of the Berlin Congress, Austria occupied with armed forces Bosnia and the Herzegovina, the new danger-spot of Europe began to be recognisable on the map. More than the Mediterranean ambitions of Russia, did it condition the development of the eastern question.

While the Serbs were awarded Pirot and Vranja, Nish, Lescovac and Toplica valley, Skoplje, Prizrend, Kossovo, Novibazar and direct connection with the Serbs of the Adriatic were denied them. The Turkish zone of Novibazar and the zone of Austrian occupation prevented the Serbs from completing their unity on the watershed of the Danube and the Adriatic and acquiring the line Zara–Mostar–Cattaro–Skutari. The Serbs, however, were not confounded. As they could not yet think of changing the front and attacking Austria, they sought to establish firmly their Macedonian flank and win ground to the south and east. The construction of the Nish–Belgrade railway was the first step. It was built by the French, Nish was made a fortified camp, and the Timok line was secured. The advance of the Serbs threatened the Bulgar

western flank and the Turks in the Vardar valley, Vidin and Skoplje. It was the opening move of the great war for hegemony in the Balkans. But the first attempt of the young kingdom to carry the centre of gravity south and restore Dushan's empire failed. It was shattered against the Bulgars' resistance, who were as little disposed as the Serbs to renounce secular aims. The campaign undertaken by Milan in 1885 to capture Vidin from the Bulgars was a fiasco. The Bulgars broke the attack and threw the Serbs back after serious fighting through Pirot on Nish. This time Austria intervened and secured an armistice for the Serbs which saved the Morava valley from a Bulgar invasion. The peace that followed recognised the Berlin frontiers. The intervener earned scant gratitude. Pan-Slavism used its chance and drew the disillusioned Serbs completely into Russia's open arms.

Passionate internal disputes, dynastic troubles and the murder of a king which brought back the Karageorgevitch to the throne, troubled the young state, but did not affect the national aims which it had set itself to realise. When, in 1897, Greece and Turkey went to war over Crete, the Serbs gathered their strength for the march on Salonika. The Turkish victory postponed the attempt and then the Young Turk revolution and the fall of Abdul Hamid threw things into confusion. Turkey seemed condemned to dissolution and the hour of partition to have come. A European crisis followed. All the Balkan nations armed; Italy appeared on the eastern shores of the Adriatic, Austria felt her position in Bosnia threatened, and Russia slackened the reins by which she guided the Serbs. The Great-Serbian propaganda made itself felt from Skutari to Radkersburg.

Austria accordingly gathered herself together for a bold stroke by which she incorporated the mandated territory in the Dual Monarchy and restored Novibazar to the Turks. She made this clever move in the knowledge that not only was her Balkan position broken, but her own territory was threatened if the Great Serbian movement drew the southern provinces of Austria and Hungary into its vortex. But the Austria of Francis Joseph was no longer the Austria of Eugène, which by the victories of the Prince of Savoy had become the first Power in the Balkans. Serbia saw in her no

longer the protector but the oppressor. Racial sentiment and the principle of nationality were now stronger than dynastic policy and cultural association. The Serbs did not renounce the idea of resurrecting a Great Serbian kingdom and Russia had no intention of relinquishing her predominant position in the Balkans. The Western Powers, too, protested against the proclamation of the annexation and even the Porte objected to their arbitrary decision. Had not Germany stood firmly by Austria's side, had Russia not been weakened by defeats in Asia and revolutionary movements at home, Europe would have been at war in 1909. The catastrophe was avoided because the reasons for war and the preparations for war were alike inadequate, but Europe stood from now on on the threshold of a general war. From that moment Serbia armed herself for the coming day. French artillery arrived and immense stores of munitions were collected in her fortresses. Yet it was not on Austria but on the Ottoman that the blow fell.

When in 1911 Italy invaded Tripolitana and attacked the Aegæan Islands in order to win compensation for lost Tunisia and to consolidate her weakened position in the Mediterranean by an imperialist war, the moment of action came. The Christian states of the Balkans embarked on a united campaign against Turkey. Montenegro, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria took the field. Each had its own territory as a secure base of operations, and marched out to a concentric offensive. In the centre, the point of penetration in the Turkish front, Serbia had the safest position. The Turks, who had to fight on three fronts—Macedonia, Thrace and Thessaly—were in evil case. Their only line of retreat lay on their hard-pressed right flank, the right wing was threatened with encirclement in Thrace, the advanced centre in Macedonia was without support, the left wing was bent round to face the menace from the south, and the garrisons of Albania and Novibazar were hopelessly isolated. The Serbs in their safe position on interior lines feared no foe and won easy victories in Novibazar and the Vardar valley. While the Bulgarians turned the right of the main Turkish army and threw it back on Constantinople from Adrianople, Kirk-Kilisse and Lule Burgas and the Greeks rolled up the left flank in Thessaly, the Serbs

broke the Vardar army and advanced from Kumanovo to Skoplje and Monastir. As the Serbs were not aiming at Constantinople, England, France and Russia stayed their advance on the line Skoplje-Monastir. With every step the Serbs destroyed Austrian hopes and did injury to the interests of Central Europe.

But the victorious Serbs, who once again ably moved their centre of gravity and with irresistible force had made the double advance from the Morava to the Vardar and from the Danube to the Adriatic, were not content with the conquest of Skoplje (Uskub) and Monastir. They envied the Greek possession of Salonika, the unattained historic aim of the old Serb kingdom from which Stephan Dushan had so long ago been compelled to turn back. The successes won in Albania and Dalmatia—King Nikita of Montenegro was standing victorious before Skutari—while they pleased the Serbs of the Adriatic gave little satisfaction to those of the Morava, since the mountain tribes fought for their own hand and had no desire to submit to inclusion in the kingdom of the Karageorgevitch. Even the capture of Prizrend and Durazzo did not satisfy the imperialist ambitions of this ambitious nation which saw its Balkan future secured only by the absorption of the Illyrian and Macedonian areas without renouncing its dream of an advance over the Danube and the Save. In Macedonia they were faced with difficulties for which a peaceful solution could not be hoped. Then fate gave them a golden opportunity. The Bulgarians had passed the zenith of the offensive campaign, Adrianople still held out in their rear and before Tchataldja they were heavily defeated. When, caught between Adrianople and Tchataldja, the Bulgarians appealed to Serbia for help, the Serbs knew that at Adrianople they would fight for Macedonia and sent 50,000 men, who on March 26, 1913, planted the Serb flags beside the Bulgarian on the captured defences. Four weeks later Nikita took Skutari. The Serbs had conquered. Certainly it was no complete victory. The Montenegrins yielded to the veto of the Great Powers and abandoned Skutari; the Morava Serbs by the action of Austria and Italy had to leave Durazzo, and the quarrel over the spoils resulted in a war between the allies which created completely new conditions. But none the less,

in these battles the Serbs had proved superior to Turks and Bulgars and their state was now the leading Power in the Balkans.

In the war between the allies, the Serbs fought with their front to the east by the side of the Greeks and, supported by the Roumanian intervention, defeated their historic rivals. The war was for Macedonia and was not without some reason described by the Bulgarians as treason to Slavism. When on August 10, 1913, the Peace of Bucharest was signed, the Serbs acquired a territory of 40,000 square kilometres. They had had to leave the Adriatic coast and to yield to the Greeks Epirus, Salonika and the coast between the Struma and the Maritza, but they were absolute masters of the Morava–Vardar line, the chief artery of the peninsula, and as the sword-bearer of Russia had won a place of safety in the shadow of the Franco-Russian alliance and the *Entente cordiale* which had become a triple alliance.

The victory which Serbs and Greeks won over Bulgaria was also a victory over Austria-Hungary, which failed to save the vanquished. In the light of the Peace of Bucharest, the Balkan War appears the prelude to a general war, for the European balance of power, which had been settled by the German victories and the Peace of Frankfurt, could no longer be maintained if Serbia, confident in Russian help, sought either covertly or by war to bring to realisation her historic ambitions in Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia and Dalmatia.

It lay with the Great Powers to take into account the dangers involved in Serbia's Jugoslav ambitions. These ambitions dated back a millennium. Serb policy now strongly, now weakly, pursued, was directed to the lands occupied by the Serb tribes, and its province ranged from the lands between the Drave and the Save to the coasts of the Adriatic and the Aegæan. Consequently, when after the defeat of Bulgaria and the partition of Turkey the Serbs stood firmly in Macedonia and on the Adriatic, the obvious next step was to change their front and march against Central Europe.

The Serb had to hasten. If the Dual Monarchy made a last-hour settlement of the Jugoslav difficulty within its frontiers and united Croats, Bosnians and Slovenes under Franz Ferdinand by passing from Austro-Magyar dualism to Austro-

Magyar-Serbo-Croat trialism, the Great Serbian propaganda was all in vain. Not a day did the Serb waste. On June 28, 1914, the Archduke was murdered in the streets of Saraievo by Serb bullets. It was more than an outrage; it was the long-expected signal for a European war. Russia was ready and was not disposed to yield a second time to Austria if the latter demanded punitive measures and sought to confine Serbia to her actual frontiers. Not in vain had France let Russia know that the French stood solidly by her.

Serbia held the fate of the whole European system in the meshes of her Great Serbian policy when after the Archduke's murder she received the Austrian ultimatum and appealed to Russia. She knew that Russian help would not be lacking, though not for her sake did Russia think of war, but in the expectation of overthrowing Austria and ending the two-century-old battle for Balkan hegemony by the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy. The war for the Dardanelles connects closely with the war for the Rhine. The Serb knew well that the Great Serb Empire could be erected only on the ruins of Austria-Hungary. He sought Russian help against the threat offered him and so cleverly changed the Austro-Serbian dispute into a general European quarrel. On August 2, 1914, the Serb spark had produced the flames of a World War which, as Bismark had foretold, had been created by an eastern question.

In the World War Serbia's battle amounted to self immolation. The Serbs retired before the scattered Austrian armies, until their incautious advance had lost touch with its base and then fighting on interior lines passed to the offensive, recovered Belgrade and the river frontiers and first yielded when Germans and Bulgars came to Austria's aid and by an attack on two fronts broke into the Morava stronghold. But though there was yielding there was no surrender. The remnants of the Serb army took on its shoulders not only their sick monarch and the aged Pasics, their greatest statesman, but the state itself and after the last defeat at Kossovo transported it beyond the frontiers across the hills of Albania.

The Serb campaign revives old history. In the World War the Serbs fought on the Morava, the Vardar and the Adriatic, on all the classic fields of their history, and survived. They

even planted their flags at the furthest south of their ambitions in the Anglo-French entrenchments at Salonika and from there emerged to win the long dreamt of Great Serbian empire. Fate was on their side. When in December 1915 the Kaiser halted the victorious armies of the Central Powers on the Greek frontier and refused to attack Salonika, he was blind not only to the strategic fact that the enemy was left firmly fixed on his eastern flank, but also to the historical fact that, after the stabilisation of the western front, it would be on the eastern front that the decisive attack would take place.

Serbia did not receive Salonika after the war, but the creation of Great Serbia depended on the retention of Salonika during the war as the *Entente's* eastern base. The advance of the Allies who in September 1918 broke through the front of the war-weary Bulgarians and pressed up the Vardar valley to reach Belgrade across the barricade of dead built by the last German battalion on the Morava and to break the historical Danube flank of the Central Powers, showed clearly the unity of the strategic lines which ran from the Balkans to the Rhine and in the World War united East and West in a life and death struggle. The problem of the Rhine and the problem of the Dardanelles became one.

With these the Serb had nothing to do. His aims concerned neither the Bosporus nor the Rhine, but the foundation of his Jugoslav empire depended on the solution of these fateful problems. Russia did not appear at Versailles, Austria-Hungary had disappeared, Turkey had been driven to its Asiatic homeland, and so France and Britain could, in the absence of the three principals, treat the Dardanelles problem as secondary. But as the Rhine problem increased in importance thereby, the future of Jugoslavia was intimately tied to it. Jugoslavia was thus involved in the French policy of hegemony although fundamentally having no connection with it. The Jugoslav position depends not on France's position on the Rhine but directly on the relations with the Italian and the Balkan states and less directly on relations with the Germans and the Magyars.

Serbia, too, did not emerge from the Peace Conference satiated. To-day Jugoslavia contains 249,000 square kilometres and 12,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 4,000,000 are

Serbs, 3,700,000 Croats, and 800,000 Slovenes, but it does not yet know peace. There has arisen the quarrel with Italy. The war for the Adriatic is not yet fought out, and shortly after the conclusion of peace at Versailles led to the appearance of the old historic foe in new guise from Tarvis to Split. Jugoslavia has assumed the place of Austria ; Italy claims the heritage of Venice on the Dinaric Alps. Where Croat and Serb fought for ten centuries until the Magyar, conquering both, reached the Dalmatian coast and threw the county of Trieste into Austria's arms, the historic battle front has again been erected. The first encounter gave Italy the lead. When in March 1919 the Jugoslav National Assembly met, the Great Serbian Cabinet announced : " The whole district of Trieste, Gorizia and Fiume is ours ; ours is the Batschka, ours the western Banat, to which geography has bound Temesvar, Verschitz and Weisskirchen." But the Jugoslav was not strong enough to defend his claim, and had to leave the largest part of the Banat to Roumania, and Istria, Fiume and Zara in the hands of Italy. He advanced to Carinthia and over the Drave and the Mur, for Woodrow Wilson and the Western Powers were putting German lands up for auction, but was abandoned by them when Rome played the card of the secret treaty of 1915, in which England and France had made every conceivable promise in order to draw Italy into the war.

On September 12, 1919, Italian volunteers under d'Annunzio entered Fiume, took possession of the town, which was occupied by Allied detachments, and made this Danzig of the south a " free state." This was the first stroke against the Versailles settlement. As such, it is of great importance, since it demonstrated the weakness in one case at least of the new system.

Jugoslavia contented herself with a tiny portion of the harbour, but the war for the Adriatic was not settled by the Treaty of Rapallo in which Jugoslavia and Italy on November 12, 1920, reached agreement on the division of the Dalmatian coast. Jugoslavia has merely concluded an armistice. Her political centre of gravity passes again from the northern frontier to the Dalmatian coast and the Macedonian lowlands after the Jugoslavs had occupied the first Balkan possessions of the Bulgar on the Macedonian highlands.

The position of Jugoslavia in the mirage of Versailles is fixed by her inclusion in the French continental system and her advance to the Drave and the mouths of the Mur and the Theiss. Serbs, Croats and Slovenes stand with their backs to their true front and are so placed that they are incapable of marching on the Adriatic lands with all their forces. Like the Roumanians, the Serbs came out of the Central European sphere during the war and entered the camp of the outlying Powers. Serbia now sees herself compelled to persist in a position which hinders the attainment of her Mediterranean ambitions. She cannot hold at the same time Temesvar, Radkersburg and Marburg, Ochrida and Strumnitza ; she cannot at the same time covet Trieste, Fiume, Salonika and Skutari.

The alliance which she has made with Czechoslovakia and Roumania in order to keep the Austrians and the Magyars in subjection, is an alliance of a growing maritime state with a central inland state which is in the very heart of the Central European area, and with a state which is a corridor state in the danger zone with both maritime and continental connections. It is therefore important for Jugoslavia, but it is also easily dissolved. Even the clientship in which she stands to France can easily be ended since the Serb can make sacrifices in Carinthia in order to turn south.

Jugoslavia is an unfinished creation and her territory is not an economic unity. The frontiers have been determined by external considerations and the irreconcilable differences in religion and culture split the Serbo-Croat nation into strongly marked parties, but the desire for hegemony pulses so strongly that the new state derives a unifying and quickening strength from it, and the scheme of expansion seems so magically provided with a basis through the connection of the Danube plain with the Adriatic and Thessalonican outlets that it has only to be realised to win national support. Both peoples realise that the facts of the case demands a close co-operation. The political star of Jugoslavia gleams more brightly than that of any other of the creations of Versailles. But it gleams with that red light which to the old astrologers signified war. Jugoslavia will not win either the Istrian plateau or the Macedonian plain by peaceful methods. For the moment she has come to a compromise with Italy on the Adriatic question and seeks

to win an Aegæan outlet while receiving assurances from Greece of a share in the harbour of and free transit through Salonika ; but such half measures carry the seeds of war in them. The future of Jugoslavia seems preordained to be one of war.

The tripartite ambition which through its whole history drags the Serb people in all directions, is also a characteristic of the other Slav nation which contested with the Serbo-Croats the hegemony of the Balkans. Bulgaria's early history reveals three centres of settlement in which states developed. The Bulgar, too, created a magic triangle round these outlying centres, but they could not fill the space so clearly marked out, because they were too far from the open sea and too near the Bosporus to shake off the overwhelming power of the empires which had their centres there.

The people which gave a name to the kingdom of Bulgaria is of Altaic stock. It appears in the Hunnish invasion of the Russian steppe, is found struggling on the Volga, leaves part of its forces there, and in the Vth century reaches the Dniester. The way to the south-west was opened and in 559 Bulgars and Huns of the Black Sea marched on Byzantium. They passed over the Bessarabian steppe, crossed the Danube, set foot on the land-bridge which leads south from the Black Sea and was later called Dobricland after one of their princes. They met here the Slav tribes who had followed the trail of the German emigrations and had settled among the Romans. The Slavs were quickly subdued by the warlike people from the steppe. About 660, the Bulgarian Khan Asparuch created his empire on the banks of the Pontic Danube and quartered his warriors as lords of the Slavs and Wallachs in the Dobrudja and on the wide chalk plateau of the Balkan glacis. The centre of gravity of this war-creation was on the steep banks of the Danube ; its lines of advances were to west and south. By hard fighting the Bulgarians carved out a way for themselves.

Their Khan Krum conquered the Balkan gateway to Byzantium in 811, defeated and killed Nicephorus I and, demanding entry, arrived at the walls of Constantinople. With difficulty the dying empire defended itself from its savage enemy. Krum's successor, Omortag, raised the Bulgar kingdom to the headship of the North Balkans. Omortag's capital, Pliska,

stood near the village of Aboba, not far from Shumla; great monoliths to-day recall the great king. When Omortag pressed westwards on the northern slopes of the Balkans, broke into the valleys of the Timok and the Morava, conquered the Serb tribes and advanced victoriously to the Save, the first Jugoslav empire arose between the Balkans and the Alps.

For the first time the Balkan peninsula became a flank sally port against central and western Europe. But the advance was not maintained. It broke on the power of the Carolingians, Louis the Pious called out the Frankish ban, and on the valley of the Save at the gate of the West forbade the Khan's entry to the western countries.

The Bulgarians withdrew and sought the road which led from the valley of the Vardar to the Adriatic. They advanced from east to west anticipating the Serb advance from west to east. At the close of the IXth century the Bulgarians were masters of the peninsula. They accepted the Christianity of Byzantium and turned the Khanate into an empire. Their Czar Simeon ruled from the Black Sea to the Adriatic and from the Transylvanian Alps to the Aegæan. Serbia was subject to him, Byzantium sent tribute. When Simeon obtained the independence of the Bulgarian church the Bulgarian empire became a fully independent Power. Its centre was on the Danube and at Lake Prespa and from these points it ruled the Balkan world. The real centre of gravity was in the Dobrudja steppe, where the rear was not menaced and the nature of the country preserved the strength of the dominant Bulgar race. But the great conquests never became possessions. The empire was undermined by the Bogomil heresy which adopted the theory of dualism, which saw in the visible world a creation of the Evil One and weakened the idea of the state. The empire, rent by party and dynastic strife, fell asunder to form two smaller empires. The western empire was formed on the Dinaric lakes and drew with it Macedonia, Albania and Moravia, while the eastern empire reached the Balkan passes and occupied the area between the Danube, the Aegæan and the Black Sea.

From three sides, Serbs, Byzantines and Russians advanced against the Bulgar kingdoms. The Serbs of the Adriatic were less dangerous than the Byzantines, who found support among

the Latins living in the mountains, won back the Balkan passes and threw the eastern empire back to the north glacis of the range. When the Russians appeared on the Danube and attacked the Dobrudja Bulgars in the rear, it was the end of Simeon's empire. The Bulgars of the Danube were overthrown by John Zimisces. He drove the Russians across the Dniester, conquered the Bulgar strongholds and in 971 carried the Byzantine frontiers to the Danube. Under Czar Samuel the West Bulgarian empire defended itself for a time against its foes, but it, too, fell again to the Byzantine and not to the Serb. In 1018 Basil II took Ochrida, whose fallen towers bear witness to-day to the brilliance of Bulgaria's early history.

The history of the first Bulgarian empire thus ends and a century of subjection follows. It served to give time for the recovery of shattered strength and led to a new development. When in 1186 the Bulgars of the Danube threw off the Byzantine yoke, the Bulgars fought in union with the Latins of the mountains. A new empire arose whose centre was the steppe on the Balkan range. Tirnovo was the spot destined by geography to be the rallying point of the new Power. It lay in a central position on the steep slopes of the Yantra valley on the northern foothills of the Balkans where the passes of the plateau, the Danube routes and the cross-roads of the Dobrudja meet. Conquest here became secure possession. The Asenids raised the new empire to imperial power. Ivan Asen II led the Bulgars again over the Vardar and drove back the advancing Serbs to the Adriatic and the Morava.

When Ivan Asen died in 1241 the second empire was at the height of its power. Innumerable fortified centres of culture on the hills of Tirnovo and Ochrida, in the neighbourhood of Skoplje and Prilep on the plateau of Sofia and on the hills of East Rumelia witnessed to its strength. But once again the advance to the Aegæan and the Albanian lakes was beyond the strength of the empire, threatened on its flanks from north and south. Bulgaria could not move freely from the Balkans as long as danger threatened from Constantinople and the Danube delta. The second empire like the first fell because of its disregard of the realities of the situation. When the Serbs appeared in the Vardar valley and Stephan Dushan led the Serbs of the Adriatic against Thessalonica in order to

extend their power in Albania, Epirus and Macedonia, the brilliance of Bulgaria waned. The western Slav Power which stood nearer the west's sources of strength, although it, too, arose from the Byzantine empire, overshadowed the Power that lay in the east. The Czar of the Serbs and Greeks was stronger than the Czar of the Bulgars and Vlachs because he fought without menace on his rear, while the Bulgar was compromised by having foes on north and south. He was engaged in doubtful defensive war with Tartars in the north and Turks in the south. When the Ottomans crossed the Hellespont, surrounded Byzantium, conquered Thrace, and planted the crescent in Adrianople, the southern gate of the Balkans, the shadows gathered over the second empire. The Bulgarian empire was the first Slav Power in the Balkans to fall to the Ottoman.

The Turkish rule, a period of dark servitude, lasted nearly five hundred years and crushed land and people. Only the church held out and became the saviour of the national idea. The XVIth century which Suleiman filled with his fame still knows nothing of any struggle for liberty. The Turk was master and suffered no revolt. But in the last year of that century came the first rising. It set the whole Balkan glacis afire while the Turk warred in Hungary. This was the hour when the Roumanians first looked out from the Transylvanian Alps and Michael the Brave led the Wallachians across the Danube in order to extend his kingdom to the Balkans. Thousands of Bulgarians adhered to him, but the campaign of the Roumanian leader ended in failure and the Turk took a horrible revenge. Bulgaria submitted and suffered another century of slavery. When Kara Mustafa was defeated before Vienna and the Imperialists carried their standards as far as Nish, the Bulgarian villages were deserted by men and boys who went to fight the Turk in the mountains. Once again the Christian population yielded to Turkish power ; again the avenger waded in blood. As the Imperialists had retired after their brilliant advance to fight France, the Turkish vengeance overtook all the defeated peoples from the Maritza to the Save and depopulated all the regions recovered.

So, in spite of Eugène's victories, confidence in Austria disappeared. The orthodox Slavs and with them the Bulgars

turned their eyes to the Russia of Peter the Great. In vain for a century Bulgaria awaited Russian aid. All that time it lay in deepest distress, for the decline of the Sultan's power showed itself in increasing anarchy which abandoned the population to the caprice of the Pashas and the Janissaries. Towards the end of the XVIIIth century this culminated in the creation of a military pirate state. The Bosnian Pasvanlogu made himself master of Vidin, extended his sway as far as Adrianople and appeared as lord of Bulgaria, entertaining great designs. Imperialist France sought to use this adventurer to extend its sway over the east and promised him, through the Directory, the throne of the Sultan if he surrendered to France Egypt and the large islands of the Southern Aegæan. Pasvanlogu's death ended these schemes amid which Napoleon's expedition to Egypt is a grotesque episode. But in their distress the Bulgars looked only to Russia. They did not know that, true to the conceptions of Peter and Catherine, Alexander I thought not of the liberation but of the subjection of the Balkan peoples and in Tilsit negotiated with Napoleon for the acquisition of Moldavia, Wallachia and Bulgaria. They thought the Czar fought for Bulgaria's resurrection and sent their volunteers to his armies which in 1810 appeared at the Shipka Pass. Again their hopes were dashed. Because of the approaching conflict with France the Czar recalled his armies, concluded peace and contented himself with the Pruth frontier. In the peace signed at Bucharest there is no mention of Bulgaria.

When in 1829 the Russians again appeared on the Balkan glacis, Bulgaria experienced the same disappointment. Bulgarian volunteers fought in the Russian ranks on the Danube and in the mountains, but the peace concluded on September 14, 1829, at Adrianople, again ignored Bulgaria. A desperate attempt of the Bulgarian patriots to strike for freedom while the Russians were still in Thrace was repressed not by Turkish troops but by Diebitsch's Cossacks. No fewer than 70,000 Bulgarians eluded the vengeance of the Turk by retiring with Diebitsch to Bessarabia.

The fires of insurrection were, however, never again extinguished in the Bulgarian mountains. They smouldered until 1876 summoned flames from the ashes. When the inhabitants

of the Rumelian highlands took the insurrection of the Bosnian Serbs as pattern and rose *en masse* against the Turks, the whole Christian population was carried away. The Turks smothered the rising in the blood of the defenceless population but they could not now break the will to live of the Bulgarian nation. This time, Russia kept her long-pledged word and fought a decisive battle with the Turks on the Bulgarian glacis. When Russia a second time compelled the Turks to make peace at Adrianople the frontiers of the old Bulgarian empire appeared in the preliminary treaty of San Stefano. Pan-Slavism, which was now in its idealist period, saw in the Bulgars, who possessed like the Russians the Cyrillic script and the oldest traditions of the southward migrations, its truest sons, and Russian imperialism played with the recreation of both the old empires under the protection of the White Tsar.

Russian policy amused itself with this dream until the Berlin Congress opposed to it a European solution of the Balkan question. Bulgaria was sacrificed to the peace of Europe. The Bulgar saw the old Macedonian empire taken from him and the frontiers of his Danubian kingdom established on the Balkans and the Danube. The erection of this liberated region to an independent principality which still paid tribute to the Sultan, he reckoned as of little worth and refused to consent to a historic renunciation. The old enmities which had troubled the Balkans from the arrival of the Slavs to the submission of all of them to the Turk awoke from their sleep of five centuries. Bulgaria's future was more dangerously exposed to their effects than the other states, for Bulgaria, in spite of her outlying position on the Black Sea, saw herself pressed on three sides and exposed to all the disadvantage of a cramped central position. The Bulgar had to consider that every step onward endangered the perilously poised balance of power in the Balkans, erected by the Great Powers at the Berlin Congress between Serbia, Roumania, Greece and Bulgaria. In spite of that the Bulgar took the first step, for the pressure exercised by geography was stronger than prudence. The Bulgar people rose in order to control its own destiny. The southern glacis was the first to move. When in 1885 the Rumeliots rose against the Porte and demanded the union of East Rumelia with Danubian Bulgaria, the

eastern question reached a decisive phase. Alexander of Battenberg, who had been elected Prince of Bulgaria by the National Assembly at Tirnovo on April 29, 1879, and had maintained himself amid the furious conflict between Russian and Austrian influence, hurried to Philippopolis and took possession of East Rumelia. This was the decisive act in the completion of the Bulgarian centre of power which won back not only the fruitful valleys at the southern edge of the Balkans but also the southern glacis of the main Balkan position on which of old its strength was based. The Balkan passes and the Danube narrows were both again in Bulgarian hands ; the battlefields on which emperors and generals of all peoples and times had fought to pass from the Danube to Constantinople or from the Straits to the Danube were again enclosed in the domains of a small nation which had been led by fate to this strategic barrier and had established itself securely upon it.

But this action called Serbs and Greeks into the lists and roused the wrath of Russia, to which no really independent state was welcome between the Danube and Constantinople. The Serb drew the moral from Bulgaria's action and advanced on Sofia and Vidin. The Serbo-Bulgarian conflict became the dominant factor in the Balkan problem even before the pan-Serb and pan-Bulgar movement had overstepped the frontiers of Old Serbia and Old Bulgaria. The war for the gates of the Morava–Vardar valley began. The Serb invasion was shattered by the Bulgarian counter-offensive. The Serbian northern army fell back from Vidin, the main army, in spite of a concentric advance from Nish, Pirot and Vranja on Sofia, was brought to a standstill by the Bulgars moving on interior lines, and after a bloody three days' battle at the bridgehead of Slivnitza was flung back on Nish. Alexander pursued the beaten army on the Pirot road and took Pirot, the key of the Nizava valley, which opened to him the road into the Morava area.

Then Austria counselled the abandonment of the victorious advance on Nish, a step that set the whole Balkan world and Russia in motion. The peace concluded at Bucharest on March 3, 1886, divided rather than reconciled the two nations, though it restored the *status quo*. As Bulgaria, however, retained Rumelia and the Sultan contented himself with the

mere appearance of suzerainty, Bulgaria appeared the real victor. Alexander paid for victory with his throne. He fell victim to a military conspiracy under Russian auspices, but the attempt to instal a Russian prince in Sofia in order to turn this kernel of a Balkan empire into a Russian satrapy completely failed. The National Assembly elected Ferdinand of Coburg as prince and defied the veto of Alexander III. The election was recognised neither by the Powers nor the Porte but the prince pleaded a summons from the nation and let time work for him. Bulgaria celebrated its new development by murdering ministers and generals, but gradually emerged from disorder and in 1894 again found favour with Russia, which at this time was entering the alliance with France against Germany and Austria and sought to win the adhesion of the Balkan Slavs.

An understanding between Russia and Austria meant the preservation of equilibrium in the Balkans but it was imperilled at each moment by the claims of the Balkan states. Southern Macedonia was still unpartitioned and was claimed by Bulgars, Serbs and Greeks. The Serb pushed southwards from his restricted continental position to the sea ; the Greek sought to secure for his maritime state the coasts which stretch from Thessaly to Gallipoli and are dotted with Greek towns ; the Bulgar resumed his advance from east to west and relied on the community of race between himself and the oppressed populations between the Maritza and the Drin in the vilayets of Salonika, Monastir and Kossovo.

Bulgaria always regarded the Macedonian question as if it were purely a Bulgarian question, but did not succeed in settling it. When in 1897 Greece declared war on account of Crete, the Macedonian question retired into the background, for the Turk once again struck hard and the Austro-Russian understanding survived a severe test. Macedonia lay, as it were, in the path of the storm and in 1903 the storm broke. The rising, which was supported by Bulgar volunteers and involved the whole population, soon became a general *mêlée* and the whole area between the Shardagh and the Rhodope was year in year out the scene of terrorism and brutality without any of the interested states deriving any profit. The Great Powers refused to risk the peace of Europe by solving

the Macedonian question and were prodigal of rhetoric but reduced action to a minimum. They had no concern with the Balkan states but looked to their own very conflicting interests. Russia was compromised in the Far East; Britain was allied to France in fighting Germany in Morocco, and Austria-Hungary, weakened by internal crisis, lay in a state of disintegration that foretold approaching dissolution.

In 1908, however, Britain abandoned her reserve and demanded the appointment of a Governor-general for the area in revolt. There were risks in the proposal. It was opening the question of the succession to the Turkish possessions in Europe before the Sick Man was dead and acted as a summons to the Christian peoples to proceed to state their claims. Germany, Russia and Austria refused their consent, but the mischief had been done. Young Turks, Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks were all in movement. When Abdul Hamid fell before the attack of the Young Turks the new Turkey gave itself a constitution which promised justice to all the nationalities; the Balkan world was seized with a veritable riot of fraternisation under cover of which all were preparing for a decisive struggle. The volunteers withdrew but the Powers took the field. When Austria, all too late, shook off her lethargy and rescued Bosnia and the Herzegovina from chaos by incorporating the mandated provinces in the Dual Monarchy without asking the views either of the Sultan or the Powers, the Balkan nations entered on the path to a Balkan war. The Christian populations again challenged the Ottoman to battle. On Bulgaria fell most of the weight of the struggle. She had her own territory as base of operations and fought with her rear secure, but the Turk united his main forces before the Bulgarian lines and retired though defeated towards the sources of his strength. When Bulgaria turned from Rumelia and attempted an encircling attack on the main Turkish position, she risked all on a throw. With her face turned away from her Macedonian ambitions she fought on the extreme edge of her sphere of interests, between the Maritza and the Sea of Marmara. In October 1913 three Bulgarian armies, marching concentrically, broke from the Balkan range, surprised the Turk and drove his armies after bloody fighting through Lule Burgas to the Tchataldja lines.

The line of retreat to Constantinople was not cut, but the enemy had been heavily defeated and a third of his forces was doomed to destruction in Adrianople.

When the Bulgars attacked the trenches at Tchataldja and the thunder of their guns shook the walls of Constantinople old campaigns were alive in the memory of the victors. The time seemed come for a third empire. But the Bulgarian strength was exhausted. Once again Bulgarian history chronicles a sudden rise ending in a heavy fall, again the dull Bulgar misread the course of events. The victories of the Greeks and Serbs, won under cover of the Bulgarian campaign, instead of warning the Bulgars to accept the Turkish offer of peace made in November, spurred them to new activity. In vain Russia interposed a threatening veto on the attack on Constantinople. For six days the Bulgars battered at the Tchataldja lines and then fell back exhausted and decimated. The repulse altered the whole situation. The Porte could breathe again; Serbia and Greece rested amid their booty; the Powers intervened. When Ferdinand in such circumstances acceded to the Turkish request for an armistice, Bulgaria was no longer able to act as victor. Her freedom of action was hampered. In vain she demanded Adrianople and Dedeagatch in order to assert herself beside her more fortunate rivals. When the Porte declined to sacrifice the still uncaptured bridgehead of Adrianople and war was resumed, Serbia and Greece had no enemies before them, while the Bulgars once again had to fight for a decision. At this crisis the Bulgars completely miscalculated the situation. They did not realise that they were strengthening the position of their allies (who had now only to defend their booty against the Great Powers with their divided interests), while Macedonia was abandoned to these allies, the Bulgars themselves having again to fight the Turks. Bulgaria fought to her own woe and to the profit of Greeks and Serbs; fought as an isolated state and turned her back on the road on which historic ambitions pointed.

When the Bulgars failed to take the defences of Constantinople and had to ask Serb aid to take Adrianople, they acted in complete political and strategic dependence on their allies; they had placed their claim to Balkan hegemony in the hands of their opponents. What the Bulgars lost, the Serbs, Greeks

and Roumanians gained. The fall of Adrianople did not free Bulgaria from her dependence. Her true course would have been to oppose, in alliance with Turkey, the other Balkan states as they pressed southwards and eastwards. After the fall of Adrianople she was confronted with the territorial demands of Roumania, Serbia and Greece, which embraced not merely the new conquests but old Bulgarian territory. Then the Bulgar realised that he had sinned against geography ; he was surrounded by foes and paid for his error by the loss of what he claimed historically. It was too late to change front, and Bulgaria simply became the object of compensations to the surrounding states.

Roumania demanded Silistria and a new frontier in the Dobrudja ; Serbia sought compensation for the renunciation extorted by Italy and Austria on the Adriatic coast, and Greece supported the Serb claims in order to obtain the whole Thracian coast. Bulgaria saw herself flung into a war for her integrity and in reckless contempt of consequences sought to content Roumania with the surrender of Silistria and threw her whole forces against the Serbs and Greeks. It was a change of front without parallel in history. Turning westward, the Bulgars left the Maritza for the Vardar to win back Macedonia from her allies. In this desperate struggle the Bulgars broke all the laws of strategy. They attacked everywhere with divided forces and fell before a counter-attack concentrically conceived before their shattered offensive could penetrate the gap in the enemy lines. They were beaten but they never fought more grimly.

Bulgaria escaped total destruction because her foes shunned fighting out so desperate a battle and because Roumania seized her chance to enter the conflict as arbitrator. From her disaster Bulgaria saved only the hinterland of Kavalla and saw herself thrown back again on East Rumelia and the northern Balkan glacis. She had fought a war on four fronts and lost it and now she awaited the hour of revenge. That hour she believed had come when Russia gave the signal for the World War. This time she went warily and in the competition of the Powers for her alliance saw her flank position in the Balkans turning to her advantage. But hate of the Serbs drove her to accept a doubtful hazard. The war between

East and West was decided in the World War. Bulgaria joined the Central Powers.

In the World War Bulgaria, wedged in between Serbia and Roumania and covered by the Turks, fought in the west, south and north. Her political aims were in the west and from the Bulgarian point of view the war was one for Macedonia and the resurrection of the old West Bulgarian empire. The north front became the area for a flank attack on Roumania, the south front afforded flank protection for an advance to the Aegæan. Actually, Bulgaria fought but one campaign, in which her armies emerging from the line Vidin–Sofia drove the Serbian flank guards back on Kossovo toward which the main Serb armies were retiring from Belgrade and Semendria before the Austro-German attack. When Austria vetoed a Bulgarian advance to the Adriatic and the offensive of the Central Powers was stayed at the Greek frontier, the campaign lost all meaning for Bulgaria. Her armies, however, held the left wing of the front in order to cover the Doiran–Florina position and confine the *Entente* forces to Salonika, and in this position they remained, withered, and died.

The flank attack in the north which, in 1916, a Bulgarian army undertook with Mackensen's army in order to wreck the Roumanian offensive, led the Bulgars further into enemy territory than on the main front. It over-ran the Dobrudja, crossed the Danube and brought the Bulgars to Focsani. The political aim, the recovery of the Dobrudja, which was the reason for this attack, was historically as well-founded as that of the campaign in the south. These far-flung ambitions, however, to restore the old continental empire of Simeon fell victim to the conflicting obligations of a war of coalitions. Bulgaria was not crushed by the weight of that war, but by the recognition that there was now no room in the Balkans for the fulfilment of her dreams. By the Versailles settlement Bulgaria was confined to her corner, losing even her outlet on the Aegæan. Disarmed and bled white, her population numbering scarcely 5,000,000, Bulgaria to-day occupies an area of 103,146 square kilometres, which forms a rectangle whose sides are the slopes of the Balkans, the valleys of East Rumelia, the Rhodope and the Danube. The capital, Sofia, is thrust westward and is exposed to the threat of a concentric Serb

invasion; from the Struma to the Maritza Greek Macedonia cuts the Bulgars off from the sea; on the Black Sea flank, Roumania is at the gates of Varna; the Turks hold Adrianople and keep guard on the Dardanelles.

Like Hungary, Bulgaria is forced back on herself, but her power to live is unbroken. If the Bulgars succeed in mastering their internal difficulties their position is assured. The Bolshevik idea gained ground mainly in Hungary, Roumania and Bulgaria. It is dying out in Hungary, but still possesses destructive force in Bulgaria and Roumania. In the backward agrarian development in these two lands it finds a valuable ally and in conquered, mutilated Bulgaria is aided by the national despair. The result has been that Bulgaria has been isolated, but the political development is determined less thereby than by the revision of her historic aims which can no longer be set out in their old form by a weakened land. That will mean a simplification of policy and the use of all the national strength towards one clear end. It is not possible to have a quadruple ambition and simultaneously see the realisation of the old ambitions in the regions of Ochrida, Macedonia, the Bosporus and the Black Sea. Already a certain rallying of her strength has been accomplished.

The Bulgarian irredenta has given itself for device "Macedonia for the Macedonians" and Bulgaria demands nothing but the creation of an independent state of Macedonia. As Bulgaria is excluded from Macedonia, this ambition is directed inevitably against Jugoslavia and Greece. Greece feels herself particularly assailed since her Macedonian territory is commanded by the mountains. The lowland line Salonika–Seres–Drama is commanded by the flanking highland line Gevgeli–Petritch–Nevrokop. At Gevgeli the Vardar emerges from the mountains; not far from Petritch the Struma emerges and at Nevrokop the Struma seeks a way to open country between the Bosdagh and the southern slopes of the Rhodope. Serbia secured herself against surprise when she secured at Versailles the Bulgarian Strumnitza valley which runs eastwards at the northern end of the Belesch massive and threatens the Bulgar sally-port of Petritch on the flank. Greece was not so fortunate. She is secured neither by Gevgeli before Doiran nor by the Rupel Pass before Petritch, and her frontier

runs along the foot of the hills, from which Serbs and Bulgars overlook it.

When in autumn 1925 there was an affray west of the Struma valley between Greek and Bulgarian frontier guards, Bulgaria stood in danger of invasion. The excitement which shook all Macedonia ended in a military advance by the Greek frontier division on Petritch. Disarmed Bulgaria appealed to the League of Nations and found it very ready to urge the small nations to keep the peace, since the Great Powers were negotiating on the Rhine and were involved in conflict in Asia and wanted no disturbances. The League acted towards Greece just as the Concert of Europe used to act, but the causes of the trouble were not removed and the Macedonian problem is still unsolved. Rightly Bulgaria avoided a conflict; her hour is not yet come.

Bulgaria is disarmed, but her strategic position is more favourable than it looks. It is not hopeless even if the other states continue to offer united opposition to the realisation of her elementary desires. The Serb and the Greek claims will not always be reconcilable. The Balkan peoples so intersect that the frontiers can neither be guaranteed nor fixed. The Bulgars, condemned by the Powers at Versailles to extinction or a policy of despair, actually enjoy full liberty of action. Bulgaria can ally herself with any neighbour to form a common front against a third state. Her natural front is still the southern one where Greece cuts her from the Aegæan outlet she needs; her political flank is in the Dobrudja where the Black Sea lies divided between Russia and Turkey, and a common Black Sea policy could unite Turkey, Russia and Bulgaria against Roumania and the West. Most important of all are her relations to Turkey which must protect her flank in Thrace and on the Bosporus if she is to remain a Balkan Power. Here prospects arise which were first dimly perceived after the fall of Adrianople in 1913. Perhaps crushed and mulilated Bulgaria holds to-day the key to the new form of the Balkan riddle.

CHAPTER XIII

ITALY AND ITS HISTORIC AIMS

THE present organisation of the continental mass of the Balkan peninsula is, strategically regarded, one for the encirclement of Germany, Austria and Hungary plus Bulgaria, the task of watching the last being assigned to Jugoslavia and Roumania. The frontier of this continental mass is the Adriatic–Black Sea line running from Durazzo through Ochrida, Doiran, Ismilan, Adrianople to Iniuda. Outside it lie Greece, Turkey and Albania, the two former participating in the encirclement of Bulgaria but standing outside the continental mass. Greece protects the land-bridge which leads from Salonika *via* Drama and Dedeagatch to Gallipoli, while Turkey guards in the angle Enos–Adrianople–Iniuda between the Aegæan and the Black Seas the entrance to the Sea of Marmara and the approaches to Constantinople. The Macedonian and Thracian coasts belong strategically to the Mediterranean sphere. Through the desire of Serbia for Salonika and the claim of Bulgaria to Dedeagatch the Macedonian problem has become more complicated but is less important than that of the Dardanelles. When the Bulgars were repulsed to the mountains, Greeks and Turks were left facing one another in arms on the Maritza. They continued the conflict which has extended from the Balkan massif to the Mediterranean area. In that area, however, the precedence belongs to Italy, which once ruled the Mediterranean world from the centre and to-day is established from the Brenner to the Dalmatian coast on the south-west flank of the Danube plain before the south-eastern frontiers of Switzerland.

The Italian sphere of influence beyond the Alps is naturally divided into two sections—the great plain of the Po and which resembles the Roumano-Bulgarian Danube valley and is connected with the Continent and with the long mountain region of the Apennines which is completely in the Mediterranean area. Once both parts were ruled from a central point by the mysterious Etruscans. In the VIIth century B.C. these

extended their power across the Po and the Tiber and began to decline only after the invasion of the Celts and the rise of Rome. Then the two regions were parted and three centuries elapsed before the Romans took over the entire heritage of Etruria and, pushing north, left the Apennines behind them. About the middle of the IIIrd century B.C. the Roman occupation of the Mediterranean mountain land had so developed as to let them take the offensive and cross the Apennines in order to give their empire its natural bulwark. The war with the Celts gave the Romans possession of the northern slopes of the range, but they remained on this bastion, before which the right bank of the Po lies as a glacis, and turned to southern expansion and the conquest of Sicily, the dominant central position in the Mediterranean. Rome was dilatory in taking the step, but having taken it, she never looked back and so founded her maritime position and robbed the Carthaginians of the supremacy at sea. Not until Hamilkar Barka created in Spain, beyond the reach of the Roman fleet, a continental base of operations and Hannibal in the most brilliant of all flank marches crossed the Pyrenees and the Alps to break into the Roman stronghold from the north, did Rome change front and advance, with strategic wisdom, but in insufficient strength, the north glacis of her Mediterranean realm from the slopes of the Apennines and the Po valley to the Maritime Alps so as to win the Rhône as frontier.

The Celtic tribes between the Apennines and the Alps had already been subdued before Hannibal entered Italy, but the Roman colonists in their territory were still not Italian settlers but Roman soldiers in garrison outside the peninsula kingdom. It was in the plain of the Po that the Romans first learned to think continentally.

In Cisalpine Gaul, Hannibal had a land strategically ready. The Via Aurelia which ran north-west from Rimini across all the streams flowing north-east, presented itself as an ideal strategic line of advance into the conquered territory. Already Piacenza and Cremona covered the passage of the Po for consular armies, and the Via Flaminia ran from Spoleto through the Furlo Pass to the Adriatic coast to secure the communications of a Roman army advancing north. In the first encounter, however, with the invading Carthaginians, Rome

was defeated at the Trebvia before the gates of Etruria on a spot strategically inevitable after Hannibal had eluded the Roman army on the Rhône and crossed the Alps outside the Roman sphere of operations. The defeated Romans fell back on the line Rimini–Arezzo, the great flank position from which the Etruscans had dominated north and south Italy for two centuries, and concentrated for a new advance on either side of the Apennines. The Roman intention was to fight a decisive battle on the frontiers of Apennine Italy but Hannibal was too quick for them. Leaving his second base of operations he marched to his flank and penetrated the Apennines to the west of the inactive enemy, and having thus turned the Arezzo–Rimini line appeared before Fiesole in the very heart of old Etruria and on the left flank of the surprised Romans. When he had met and destroyed the Romans at Lake Trasimene on their hasty march south, the old national frontiers were restored. Italy was again divided into two. Rome had lost the north glacis, the Apennine barrier and the line of the Arno, and again was confined to the peninsula, while Hannibal had restored the Po valley to the Continent. The strategic law here illustrated remained valid even to the day when Suvarov and Macdonald met on the Trebvia.

Apennine Italy became finally Roman in the Second Punic War and remained a unity over against the trans-Apennine valley of the Po until the glacis became a sphere of colonisation and the Italian frontiers reached the Alps. It was in a Roman colony that Teutons and Cimbri were defeated at Vercelli and Aquæ Sextiæ.

When, a century after the defeat of Carthage, the Romans had advanced the frontiers of the Apennine peninsula to the Alps and had crossed the Maritime Alps, Rome had conquered the continental half of its Mediterranean realm. The conquest of the coasts of Liguria and Southern France from the Var to the Pyrenees had no connection therewith, but was part of the conquest of the land route by which Hannibal had invaded Italy from Spain. It was Julius Cæsar who first realised that the route through the Rhône valley to the north was a continental line of advance and followed it to the Saône in order to complete the most notable of all Rome's conquests. With the defeat of the German Ariovistus on the slopes of

the Sundgau, the strategic centre of gravity of the Roman empire was transferred from the Tiber to the Po. It was from the Po that Cæsar conquered Gaul and Rome. When in 48 B.C. he crossed at Rimini the Rubicon, which marked the frontier of old Italy, he turned the Arezzo-Rimini line on the left just as Hannibal had turned it on the right.

Similarly, the Alps were not crossed but were turned. The Romans stood on the Rhine and the Drave before they entered Switzerland from the south. In 26 B.C. began the methodical occupation of the Alpine passes. On the west of the Alpine mass the Salassians, the guardians of the Little St. Bernard, yielded to Terentius Varro. Turin and Aosta were founded as Roman forts, and soon became the chief defences of the north-western march of extended Italy. A few years later Drusus passed the Brenner in order to win room in the Inn valley from an advance on the Danube, while his brother, Tiberius, aided him from Switzerland, moving down the Aar, storming the Hegau gap and shattering the united Celtic tribes on the Black Forest heights, thus reaching the Bavarian plateau by the course of the Danube. All the passes fell into Roman hands without any of them having seen a Roman standard till then. To-day the Italians are again at the Brenner, astride the undefended Inn valley, while the French have again reached the Rhine bend and dominate the disarmed Black Forest. The Swiss Alpine passes from the Aosta valley to that of the Inn are exposed to a turning movement.

Four centuries later the Po valley appears as a transversal line of passage quite independent of the peaceful peninsula beyond the Apennines. When in A.D. 401 the West Goths under Alaric moved westwards from Illyria, they crossed the Tagliamento, the Brenta, the Piave, and the Adige, and were not checked by a flank threat from south of the Po. They marched straight on Turin in order to penetrate into Gaul. The Emperor Honorius fled before them from Milan to swamp-girt Ravenna, and his commander, Stilicho, first offered battle to Alaric at Pollentia in Piedmont, having assembled here the legions from Gaul and the Rhine. The battle was indecisive, but Alaric's offensive force was spent. He retired again to Illyria. The episode is significant because Stilicho bought victory on the Po by sacrificing the Rhine frontier.

Shortly after the Alpine frontier was lost, and then the Apennine. Alaric broke through the imperial army at Cremona and Ravenna without difficulty and captured Rome. The campaign shows that Rome had yielded its moral supremacy to the Germans, for Alaric won the campaign against all strategic law simply because the times were ripe for such an event. The Po fortresses had lost their protective power; even Ravenna in its marshes was defenceless. Ravenna's great days came when Theodoric led his East Goths westward from Pannonia and, despite its eccentric maritime position, made it the capital of Italy and his East Gothic empire. Theodoric had the brilliant conception of ruling Podane and Apennine Italy from the Adriatic flank although the Byzantines commanded the Mediterranean. He was the first German to rule from Italy Pannonia, Dalmatia, Alemannia, Provence, Aquitania and North Spain. Although it was only for Theodoric's lifetime, it assured the union of the Apennine peninsula with Mediterranean France, the Alpine highlands and the Danube plain.

The East Gothic kingdom fell before Byzantium because the latter held the sea. Narses moved the Italian glacis again to the Po; Apennine Italy became a Byzantine province. The old division still existed. German hosts descended from the Rhaetian Alps and broke through the newly re-established frontier. They passed over Venice, crossed the Po, routed the Apennine army of the Byzantines and in the greatest of all the invasions swept the peninsula from the Tuscan passes to the southern point of Calabria. Only when they were enervated and disunited in Campania did Justinian's army conquer them. Again the frontier of Italy was pushed to the southern slopes of the Alps. It was the last political and strategic union of the Cis- and trans-Apennine lands in an ordered whole, but it depended on sea power and was met at the Alps by an impenetrable continental mass. Justinian's governor had no authority in the trans-Alpine world; even the highlands of Friuli and Venice, the isolated mountain land of Montferrat and the Piedmontese passes were contested possessions.

The Po area, which during the last century of the Roman empire had become the most important area in Italy, again became a highway and was defended as a protection to Apen-

nine Italy only from the Apennine flank. When in 568 the Lombards broke into it through the Adriatic gates, the Exarchate of Italy was not strong enough to overcome the strategic difficulties and broke in pieces.

The Lombards introduced a new order of things in Italy. Their kingdom was established on both banks of the Po and on the rivers of Friuli and Venetia and politically was linked to the early German states which were filling the Continent with pulsing life. Italy sank behind the Apennines to be a maritime dependency of Byzantium. The Lombards treated the Po area as part of the Continent and in their history it plays the rôle created for it by Cæsar of a base of operations. It was such to Alboin when he sent his armies over the Maritime Alps, but the effort was too great for the Lombard strength. The Franco-Burgundian levies defended the Rhône valley and revealed the strength of the Rhône line in wars against the east so long as it served as a line of movement. So the Lombards turned south and crossed the Apennine barrier. The whole peninsula lay open to them and Lombard chiefs conquered Liguria, Tuscany, Umbria, Campania and Apulia. The rule of the Lombards never reached to the banks of the Garonne and the shores of Lake Constance, where Theodoric had preserved his Goths and Alemanni from the Frankish menace. The duchies across the Apennines became in time separated from the Po kingdom, but that kingdom attained an individual character that the land between the Alps and the Apennines has not yet lost. The iron crown of Lombardy on Napoleon's head marked the individual position of the Po valley. It first lost that character when Savoy, the last conqueror of Italy, pressed southwards and eastwards from the mountains of Sabaudia and Piedmont and in alliance with France drove the Austrians out of Lombardy in order to make out of feudal and theocratic states the unitary kingdom of Italy.

Then followed the development of the Italian states which acquired European significance when the European Powers at the end of the XIVth century invaded Italy and fought the battle for hegemony in Lombardy and under the walls of Rome. Italy became a European battlefield. When the Treaty of Cateau Cambrésis (1559) ended the war between

France and Spain in, and for, Italy, and the Valois retreated before the Habsburgs, the small states assumed the appearance of a united country with the exception of the Republic of Venice and the Duchy of Savoy which lay outside the area ruled by Spain.

Venice since the beginning of her history pursued a policy that had no connection with Apennine Italy. It was neither peninsular nor western, nor did she link up with the central European Continent before whose south-eastern gates she had established her amphibian state. Venetian policy was one of commercial imperialism while Lombard kings were still ruling. In the XIth century she had anticipated Britain in the policy of isolating her political and commercial interests from Europe, and from this policy she never swerved. She acknowledged the shadow of Byzantine sovereignty, at need paid tribute to the Lombards, kept out of the struggle between the Empire and the Papacy, used the creation of the Norman Mediterranean kingdom to extend her own power in the Levant, sent their caravans into the Danube plain and over the Dinaric Alps, in league with the Crusaders expelled the Byzantines from Europe, built her strongholds in the Aegæan and in the days of Frederick II was the leading Power in the east. Although her power was crippled by her rival, Genoa, and by the recovery of Byzantium, although she was driven from Dalmatia by the Hungarians, and condemned for a century to impotence, her Levantine policy never altered. She brought to a unity founded on sea power, the Dalmatian coast, Albania, Epirus, the Peloponnese and all the coasts of the Aegæan, the harbours of Syria and the Black Sea. She fought with the Croats on the Save, with Angevin Hungary on the Istrian plateau, with the Serbs on the Dalmatian coast. She contended with all the states which sought maritime development so as not to be cut off from the Levant. Her complete control of the Adriatic and the Straits of Otranto was as important for her as is the control of the North Sea and the Straits of Gibraltar for Britain. Venice turned her back on the Continent until her war with Genoa and with the hostile communes of Venetia compelled her in the XVth century to change front and seek to make inland conquests.

She needed protection for her rear and sought to find it by

extending her power from Padua to Belluno. Nevertheless, in a real sense she fought without apprehensions as to her rear because she had had no quarrel with the Ottoman when they appeared on the Bosporus but established trade connections with the Sultans and only took the offensive in the East when the Turks in their expansion pressed into her sphere of influence.

Venice was greatly weakened in the wars of the Valois and Charles V, although she sought to avoid dangers by rapid changes of front. She fought for and against the Pope, France and the Emperor. The cry of " San Marco " followed the retreat of the Swiss as surrounded by Venetian cavalry they withdrew from the lost field of Marignano and took position against Italian attacks on the south glacis of the St. Gotthard stronghold. In the middle of the XVIth century, when she began her great conflict with the Turk, she fought not for Italy but for her commercial supremacy in the East. She saw her Levantine possessions dwindle, her trade die, and regarded her allies not as the champions against Islam but as the defenders of her privileges. Don John of Austria saw the fruit of the victory of Lepanto disappear into Venetian coffers. Even the Austria of Eugène fought to save Venice. With Austrian help, Venice re-conquered the Dalmatian coast and her strongholds in Morea, but lost Morea again when Austria was involved in the War of the Spanish Succession. Her gains in Corfu and Dalmatia were acknowledged in the Peace of Carlowitz and were maintained, while in her rear Savoy was arming for the conquest of Italy.

The eastern policy of modern Italy was settled for her by the Venetian Levantine policy, but Venetian policy did not concern itself with peninsular interests. Venice was not endowed with Italian sentiment: she was a Power outside Italy and remained so till the weakened republic fell before the French Revolution. With her fall there disappeared Austria's last flank protection in front of the Laibach basin. By the Treaty of Campo Formio Napoleon gave Venice to Austria and fixed the frontier of the Cis-alpine Republic at the Adige, which thus still defined the Po area, but eight years later the victor of Austerlitz advanced the frontiers of the Viceroyalty of Italy from the Lombardo-Austrian battlefield across the Isonzo and added Dalmatia to the vassal state of Italy. For

the first time, Venice became an Italian possession. The gates of the Adriatic were open. A few years later Napoleon again defeated the Austrians, added Istria to the Illyrian province and awoke in Croats and Serbs the memory of their early greatness. An early form of Jugoslavia appeared for a brief period on Italy's east flank. To-day it is a great kingdom.

Napoleon's settlement was made for strategic reasons, not in the interests of Italy. He needed Lombardy as the passage from the western continental mass to the eastern in order to threaten Central Europe from the Adriatic flank and command the Danube line at once from the Main and from the Drave. Hence his advance of the Italian frontier to the Brenner and into the Laibach basin—an offensive conception. By the possession of this flank position the Elbe and the Inn, Hamburg, Magdeburg, Innsbruck and Trieste were strategically linked and by this advance into Central Europe, Prussia and Austria were held in check.

The threat to German territory which was created by this advance of Italy on the south-eastern flank of the Alpine lands was not caused by Italian action, since Italy was not yet an independent Power, and the turning of Italian resources to continental tasks was not then in the interests of the Italian people, whose eyes were directed to the Mediterranean. The danger of the new connection would soon have forced itself on the notice of the Italian states had not the fall of Napoleon brought the Austrians back into Lombardy. Italian policy under the House of Savoy was now able to return to the pursuit of national aims.

The rise of Savoy is the history of great renunciations. Her ruling house surrendered the land of its origin, Sabaudia, to France and under Bourbon pressure turned south to win a new land in Piedmont. Its rise in the XVIIIth century took place under the shadow of great events in Europe. It rose to power as holder of the west Alpine passes and the Rhine flank. The power that arose in the Piedmontese uplands first acquired a position of power on the Mediterranean when a prince of Savoy with an Austrian army won Turin back from the French in the War of the Austrian Succession. The battle which Eugène compelled France to fight for its relief and resulted in the French evacuation of Piedmont opened the road for Savoy

to the conquest of Italy. The Peace of Utrecht made the Dukes of Savoy lords of Montferrat, Valanza, the Lomellina, the valley of the Sesia and Sicily. In 1720 they exchanged Sicily for Sardinia. As they had acquired the county of Nice in 1388 they now stood on the outer edge of the Piedmontese fortress and advanced on the coast of Liguria and the western coast of Apennine Italy. The prospect of their capturing Milan gave this double flank position the character of an encirclement. In 1735 Charles Emmanuel secured Tortona and Novara as a result of the War of the Polish Succession. The Apennines were directly threatened. The kingdom of Sardinia fortified the positions won in front of Milan and Genoa, and at the entrances of the Apennines, while with extraordinary success it rang the changes on alliances and enmities, fought with Austria against France, fought with France against Austria and, as a rule defeated, lived on the victories of its ally. The policy was maintained with success and only Corsica was lost to Savoy before the storm of the French Revolution broke.

When Genoa sold Corsica to France in 1764, Italy lost the great floating battery which flanked and commanded Sardinia and the Gulf of Genoa. The loss was not felt in the revolutionary wars. Italy did not think as a unit and was right in the path of the campaigns of Lombardy. Bonaparte conquered the Lombardy passage and when in 1797 he signed with Austria the Peace of Leoben in Styria, he had won not merely the basin of the Po but in Italy had conquered the left bank of the Rhine.

Three years later Italy appeared for the first time as a strategic unity. The power of Napoleon was based on the terms of the Treaty of Lunéville, signed as a result of Marengo, which directly linked the Rhine–Rhône line to Piedmont and the Po basin. Napoleon had conquered Italy from Savoy. When Piedmont was incorporated in France the secular ambition of the House of Savoy seemed buried for ever. Italy became a part of the French empire and as such after Trafalgar served in the north and east the continental policy of France. Italian regiments fought for France's hegemony on all the battlefields of Europe, but the Italians learned to think as revolutionaries and pan-Italians.

The Congress of Vienna was hostile to Italian national feeling as contrary to the principles of legitimism. Savoy recovered only Genoa and Liguria, while Austria was restored to a position of power in Lombardy, Venetia and Istria and appeared on the Apennine glacis as the protector of the twelve Italian principalities each autocratically ruled. The pan-Italian ideal immediately took on a revolutionary aspect, and Austria to Italy appeared both as a foreign oppressor and a defender of reaction.

Savoy was able to secure the leadership in the war against Austria and in spite of terrible defeats and humiliating surrenders to hold it. When France consented to champion the cause of Savoy in order to break Austrian predominance, United Italy began to take form. In vain Radetzky destroyed the Piedmontese army at Novara on March 23, 1849. The Austrian victory was a severe setback to Savoy and quenched the national insurrection in Lombardy, Venetia and the tiny Apennine states, but five years later, by taking part in the Crimean War, Cavour secured for Sardinia the right to speak in the name of Italy at a European congress. Novara was avenged when, at the Peace Conference of Paris, Cavour drew up his indictment against the misgovernment of corrupt reaction in the Apennine states, in the states of the Church and in the kingdom of Naples and against Austria as its protector. Two years later Cavour obtained Napoleon III's help against Austria. Again the Italians were beaten, while the ally was victorious. Magenta and Solferino decided the campaign, since Austria felt too weak to continue the war and Napoleon was ready to compromise. Piedmont received Lombardy, Austria kept Venetia and France took Nice and Savoy. The House of Savoy sacrificed its patrimony to win Italy. It turned towards the Apennines and in 1860 overthrew the last Bourbon monarchy. The Apennines were crossed but national unity was not yet attained. The next stage was when Bismark took Italy as ally in his plan to settle the German question in order to keep half the Austrian forces in the south. Italy was defeated on land at Custozza and on sea at Lissa, but, as a result of her ally's victory at Königgrätz, received Venetia. Austria fell back on Trent and Trieste; Italy took over the policy of Venice.

Rome was the last conquest, and it Italy won in virtue of the German victories in France. When Napoleon III in August 1870 recalled the French troops from the Papal States and Victor Emanuel entered the Quirinal the conquest of Italy by the Piedmontese was complete.

Italy did not enter the European system as a "satiated state," and after a lapse of fifty years, in spite of the fact that her frontiers have overpassed the limits of the Italian people, is not yet "satiated." The new Italy appeared too late in the Mediterranean and European worlds. France had crossed the Mediterranean; Austria had taken the initiative in the Balkans.

Italian policy sought an intermediate solution. It called the lands to the north and east its irredenta and regarded Savoy, Nice, Corsica and Malta as lost. Sardinia now appeared as a worthless outer bastion facing westward to a void; Sicily, as of old, lay at the mercy of any attack from the west or the south, and with the conquest by France of the opposite coast of Tunisia, was threatened by a Carthage mightier than that which antiquity had known. So Italy turned to the Balkans to save at least the eastern coasts of the Adriatic. But the King of Italy could not claim to be the rightful heir of the Doges. The Adriatic had become an open sea to which Austrians, Hungarians and Greeks had rights and the Serbs claims. Hence, isolated Italy, which had not yet secured a firm place in the Concert of Europe, allied herself to the Central Powers in order to obtain security in the west and to exercise an influence determined by her relations with Germany and Austria-Hungary on the course of Adriatic and Levantine events. The unnatural alliance which to this end Italy made with Austria was really a compromise on the Balkan question and was ended by Austria's Balkan policy. The unhappy attempt to set foot in Abyssinia, the seizure of Tripolitana and the Dodekanese were the consequences of the forced renunciation of Tunis and of the Anglo-French settlement of affairs in the Mediterranean.

When Italy entered the World War and took the field against Austria in May 1915, she acted according to her geographical position and her historic opposition to Austria, although she delayed breaking with Germany not without

profit. The Italian army soon perceived the unfavourable nature of the strategic situation which counselled the defensive, while the rôle of attacker compelled an advance on two fronts by the passes of South Tirol, the foothills of the Julian Alps and the Dinaric Alps in order to break into the valley of the Inn and the Laibach basin.

But the path of the Roman armies called in vain. Eleven battles were fought on the Isonzo without Italy emerging from a war of positions ; her army was defeated before Trent, was driven back over Asiago and Arsiero, and in the twelfth Isonzo battle her front was broken through by the Austro-German armies and reeled back in disorder across the Tagliamento, the Brenta and the Piave on Bassano and Venice. The Italians held their position between Verona and the lagoons only because their foe gave them a breathing space and their allies hurried from Champagne to defend the line of the Marne on the Piave and at the pass of Verona. The Italians on this line broke Austria's last attack and won a final victory in October 1918 as a result of the collapse of Austria and the revolution in Hungary.

Italy helped to remodel the map of Europe at Versailles and secured territory on the north and south and numerous privileges, but was neither " satiated " nor freed from her difficulties. The advance of her frontiers to the Istrian plateau and the Brenner scarcely assured her that if war came again she would not once again have to fight her battles in Venetia. The Italian army, which in 1915 was not able to cross the Isonzo defended only by frontier guards and militia and was halted before Trent by Tirolese batteries and a couple of Bavarian Jäger battalions, cannot pursue its advance beyond the watershed and set up a front of double the length from Brixen to Fiume in order to maintain its position against the Jugoslavs. A determined advance of the Serbs would overthrow the defences before the main Italian army could become effective in the extreme north-east of the country. Even an advance against the German south flank is extremely dangerous.

Military history tells us of campaigns in which Bavaria, Austria and Bohemia were overwhelmed by armies marching separately and fighting concentrated which had marched concentrically from south and west against Central Europe, but it

knows nothing of an offensive of *allied* armies, which move with less decision. Tiberius and Drusus, Moreau and Napoleon from the Rhône–Rhine line and Lombardy set their columns in motion for a joint move on the Danube and the Drave and left the traces of their victories, but they advanced from a land united politically and geographically. If Italy were obliged as signatory of the Versailles treaty to march with France against fettered Germany in virtue of that treaty or of one of its supplements or by the provisions of the League Covenant, her position would be very different. If, inspired by pan-Italian ambitions, she marched against Switzerland to conquer the Swiss southern glacis and Bergell and Ticino, not only would she violate Article 10 of the Covenant and the neutrality which has been expressly renewed, but she would raise a fundamental problem of European policy. For whatever may be the basis of the European state system, the inviolability of Switzerland is an elementary pre-condition of all political relations. Italy cannot violate it without endangering the whole system and she will encounter more serious strategic difficulties than she believes. She has a wide offensive zone in the Adige valley, on the Ticino, on the Splügen, on the Stelvio ridge, and on the Brenner, and can completely envelope the main Ticino position. But she is exposed to a counter-stroke from the highland which could break the line of an enemy attacking on exterior lines. The Swiss may not have sufficient strength for such a counter-stroke but they will not let themselves be driven from their mountains. They must defend at any cost this four-century-old possession which is indispensable to the defence of the central area. An Italian advance against the north, no matter against whom, would be a change of front which might be fatal for Italy. The battle for southern Tirol, which she is now seeking to de-Germanise, gives a foretaste of what might happen.

If ever she were summoned to keep Germany down, Italy would be committed to operations in Tirol, the Bavarian highlands and Styria, while her true sphere in the Mediterranean would lie neglected. Italy is not the heir of Rome, but a kingdom straitly bound to a central Mediterranean area.

When the Roman Empire came under the soldier emperors, the centre of gravity of state power was transferred from Rome

to the base of operations between the Alps and the Apennines. When the Germans broke through from the Julian Alps and the Rhine flank lay exposed and Byzantium succeeded to Rome's Mediterranean heritage, a pale reflection of the West Roman Empire survived in the centre of Gaul. The last master of a West Roman army, Syagrius, as "King of the Romans and the Gauls," fell in battle with Chlodwig and left him the continental heritage of Rome. This change in the centre of gravity illustrates the development of the Cæsarian conception of the connection of Apennine Italy with Cis- and trans-Alpine Gaul until the domination of the continental kingdom of the Franks over the Mediterranean kingdom. Because of that, Italy was never made a German nation by Charlemagne or the later Carolingians or the Holy Roman Empire. The Alps formed a natural barrier between north and south which can lose its separating force only under well-defined conditions. The Romans who came from the south united north and south in one empire by turning the Alps first in the west and then in the east. The strategic conception always returns to that of Cæsar, that the Rhine–Rhône line is the great line of movement of the west half of the European Continent. From the Rhône flank the Romans conquered Gaul, Germany and Britain. They were the only Power to do so from the south. From the west, Napoleon's genius enabled him to do so by carrying out an invasion of Germany and of Italy and leaving the Alps alone between the eastward marching armies.

In the last days of the World War the Italians followed the tracks of Drusus and Napoleon into the Julian Alps and South Tirol, but they did not do so by their own strength and now they are left in an exposed position in the Inn valley. They command neither the Rhône flank and the Alps of Savoy nor the Adriatic gates nor the Laibach basin. The possession of the Brenner is not only connected with the renunciation of the recovery of the old frontiers of Savoy and Nice and the sacrifice of Dalmatia, but is also connected with the maintenance of the position created against Germany at Versailles. The adhesion of Italy to the Rhine pact only strengthens the latter connection.

From this situation there is no escape as long as Italy cannot

free herself from the pressure upon her in the Mediterranean. For that it is either too late or much too early. The Mediterranean situation shows the disadvantages to Italy of the present distribution of power and its development will scarcely make these fewer. Italy purchased Trent and Trieste by denying the Roman tradition in the western Mediterranean and in the eastern Mediterranean. She is pressed by the states planted there and by extra-Mediterranean Powers. Between French Corsica and British Malta lies a state held firmly in check and the waves of the Adriatic are still "bitter." Albania, over against Calabria, where Italy in league with Austria once called halt to the Serbs, enjoys its old-time independence and is courted by Serbia and Greece. A clever attempt to set foot in Corfu after a successful beginning was brought to naught when the situation developed dangerously. Neither Britain nor France can tolerate a re-opening of the Balkan question. The Levantine heritage of Venice has already been partitioned.

Even the hopes of gains in Asia Minor have been disappointed. When Turkey refused to accept the Versailles settlement and drove the Greeks from Asia, nothing was left of Italian claims to a sphere of influence in Cilicia save the offensive position she had built up in Rhodes and the Dodekanese. As Tripolitana has to be held by force, Italy sees herself straitly confined whichever way she looks. Such a position is the more intolerable because it is the result not of a lost, but of a victorious, war, a war whose repercussions threatened to destroy the new Italy until, finally, she surrendered to dictatorship and in Mussolinian Fascism discovered a new state ideal. Perhaps in this war Italy fought on the wrong side.

In spirit, Italy left the Triple Alliance after Bismark's death. She realised that the relative strengths of the German and the *Entente* Powers was altering to the disadvantage of Germany. She did not realise that the dissolution by force of the Dual Monarchy could not take place until the German Empire had fired her last shot and had ceased to exist as a Power capable of influencing history. The dissolution of the Dual Monarchy freed Italy from her historic enemy but the collapse of Germany involved her in a dangerous situation. So long as Germany remains impotent, Italy lacks continental support and connection with Central Europe. Consequently, in her

struggle for her vital interests in the Mediterranean there remains no help but Britain's, which will only be granted if Italy supports British interests in that sea. On the Brenner she stands before an abyss from which the voice of history comes in warning. It does not remind her of the Holy Roman Empire, but points to the connection of the great German continental area with the Italian Mediterranean area and of their union in a common destiny which, in spite of everything, remains a reality.

CHAPTER XIV

SPAIN'S FIGHT FOR HER LAST POSSESSIONS

THE Mediterranean to-day is dominated by Britain and by France. The nations of the Mediterranean peninsulas and on the African coast have more or less been driven into the background. Italy no longer dominates it from the centre ; Spain, Greece and Turkey no longer dominate it from one flank or the other. Turkey is completely cut off from the main sea area ; Greece struggles for the possession of the Macedo-Albanian north glacis ; Italy for the Southern Aegæan and the Adriatic ; Spain is reduced to her own soil and the opposite coast of Morocco and the Balearic Islands.

If we examine the Spanish peninsula in relation to the present frontiers in Europe, we see it to be a political unit surrounded on three sides by the sea and on the fourth separated from the Continent by a formidable mountain barrier. It is not really an appendage to the Continent ; it is a continent in itself. Iberia first enters into history, after the Celts had mixed with the native Iberians, as the base of operations of the Barkidae. The Carthaginians were the first to conquer the natural fortress of the Celtiberians and to break through its north-eastern defences in order, under Hannibal, to press through the south of France, cross the Rhône and the Alps and, though a Mediterranean people, threaten the Apennine peninsula from the north. When Rome overpowered her rival and Spain became a Roman province, the great crystallising process began which was to make the Pyrenean plateau the centre of an independent civilisation in which Celtiberian, Latin, German and Arab elements would be fused, in the course of centuries, into a national unity.

The first great period is at the beginning of the Vth century. Armed bands of Germans forced their way into Spain and wandered as far as the Atlantic coasts. The Suevi settled in the north-east ; the Vandals on the banks of the Guadalquivir. When Geiseric led the flower of the Vandals across the Straits and, at the head of 18,000 spearmen, conquered

Mauretania in order to make Carthage the capital of a German empire of the south which, about the middle of the Vth century, dominated the Mediterranean from the Pillars of Hercules to the Aegæan, the Suevi occupied the area abandoned by the Vandals and extended their rule from the Castile plateau to the Bay of Cadiz. Iberia then finally lost connection with Rome. The West Goths under Theodoric II broke through the Pyrenean passes, defeated the scattered levies of the Suevi, destroyed their last armies on the Guadalquivir and planted their standards even on the walls of Tangier. A great German-Latin imperial state arose on Iberian soil and became a coherent whole at the end of the VIth century after the Goths had abandoned Arianism. Aquitania was lost to the Franks, but Iberia sunned itself in the late brilliance of the Gothic kingdom until Islam sent its warriors over the Straits.

In 711 Spain for the second time was conquered from the south. The Islamic invasion overcame the exhausted Gothic kingdom, of which only a fragment survived in the Asturian hills, and penetrated as far as the Loire, only to dash itself to pieces against the Rhine-Frankish chivalry of Charles Martel, but the Arabs retained possession of Iberia from the Ebro to the Straits. This was the last conquest of the peninsula from the south, but the first to make the Pillars of Hercules the base of the Mediterranean world ; and, as in Carthaginian times, it placed Spain in arms against continental Europe. At the end of the Xth century the Omayyad Caliphate at Cordova was at the height of its glory, but the future belonged to the north, where the strong Christian states, which in the Asturias, Galicia and the Basque lands had survived the fall of the West Gothic empire, grew through their struggles with the Moor into the Spanish nation which in the highlands was able to maintain itself until its strength increased and that of the Moor declined.

When Charlemagne created the Spanish march and made Catalonia the centre of his trans-Pyrenean possessions, the offensive power of the Moorish kingdom was dead. In the XIth century the Spanish forces began to concentrate in the hills and in 1212, under Alfonso VIII of Castile, Spanish Christendom won a decisive victory at Navas de Tolosa on the Sierra Morena. Arabs and Berbers were thrown back on Cordova and Granada.

The Spanish fortress shut its northern gates and its defenders not only drove the infidel from the southern glacis, but opened a gate towards the east in order to utilise its maritime position and demand its share in the Mediterranean. When, by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, Aragon and Castile were revealed as really a geographical unity, Spain emerged from her corner position and made the land around it into a centrally-ruled whole. Unlike the other natural fortress, Bohemia, it was able to expand both by sea and on land. But the Spanish world-empire which grew so amazingly at the beginning of the XVIth century, in spite of the fabulous size of its overseas possessions, is clearly a Power with a continental policy. When Charles V, descended from Maximilian of Austria and Juana of Castile, ascended the imperial throne, Spain became the centre of the world. The tread of her mail-clad warriors rang from the Ebro to the Elbe, from the Scheldt to the Tiber, while Spanish adventurers won Mexico and Peru. When the French were forced out of Italy and Charles V had defeated German Protestantism, the Austro-Spanish empire for a moment dominated the whole western world. It retained its predominance only so long as Spain from her Iberian bases held the powerful outworks on the Scheldt, the Saône and the Po. Not until she was driven back on Spain in the Thirty Years' War did she seek to secure a flank position at the entrance to the Mediterranean.

While Richelieu was developing France's Rhine policy from the security measure of Cæsar's time to a basis of French hegemony, while the French invaded Alsace, and Britain was summoned to fight by the side of Germany against French domination, Spain concentrated her waning strength beyond the danger zone of the Rhine, though this retirement from the Rhine did not relieve her from the Anglo-Dutch pressure on her Atlantic flank, which was now making itself felt, nor from the French pressure on her Mediterranean flank.

Her retreat to her Iberian base was a fighting one and can be divided into four stages, each marked off by a peace treaty. The Peace of the Pyrenees cost her a part of the glacis of her fortress; the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle deprived her of the fortresses of the Netherlands; the Peace of Nymwegen cost her Franche Comté. The result of these three treaties was

to bring France up to the gates of Germany and to drive Spain over the Maritime Alps and the Pyrenees. In the War of the Spanish Succession Spain completed her transition from a Mediterranean to an Iberian state. The war placed the Bourbons on the throne of the Spanish Habsburgs and was decided not only on the plains of Lombardy and Flanders, on the Rhine and in Central Germany, but also on the soil of Spain and in the Mediterranean. Philip V, the grandson of Louis XIV, gained the Spanish throne by the Treaty of Utrecht, but had to give up Naples, Sardinia, Milan and the Netherlands to the Habsburgs, Sicily to Savoy and Gibraltar and Minorca to Britain. Louis XIV at this price saved the French sally port on the Upper Rhine, which he had won by the pen and defended by the sword. All that was left to Spain was the dregs of the cup.

The Spanish position had been completely shattered and the national existence gravely imperilled. Even yet, however, the Spanish fortress was not prepared to confine itself to passive defence. Although it had been deprived of well-nigh all its outworks and had lost control of the entrance to the Mediterranean to an outlying Power, its garrison rallied, won back in the War of the Polish Succession the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, recovered Parma in 1748, Minorca in 1782, and failed only before Gibraltar. That failure is of world significance. Before the Rock, not only Spain was beaten, but all the other states of the Mediterranean world, and on it Britain took the first step to world dominion. The coastal state of Portugal at that time sank to be a British vassal and has never since been abandoned by its British protectors. The loss of Gibraltar is to Spain a never-healing wound.

In the revolutionary wars, Spain fought on the north glacis of Iberia against the French until the Treaty of Bâle split the anti-revolutionary coalition. She then made a defensive alliance with France and went to war with Britain. The policy of union with her imperialist neighbour ended in defeat and dependence. On October 21, 1805, Spain's last fleet went to its last battle at Trafalgar. With its disappearance Spanish America was summoned to independence. The Spanish let themselves be tempted by Napoleon to a treaty which divided Portugal, a British dependency, between themselves and

France, but not only did Spain never enjoy the fruits of partition but had to suffer the humiliation of a French occupation. France gathered her strength for the conquest of Iberia; Louis XIV had sent his grandson to occupy the Spanish throne; Napoleon sent his brother. The great European conflict between Britain and France culminated on Spanish soil. Having conquered Germany and Italy, the French advanced to conquer the corner position of Europe; the British landed at the Tagus to threaten Napoleon's empire on the Spanish flank. The Spanish rising was fatal to Napoleon; the flames of Saragossa called the nations of Europe to shake off the hegemony of France.

After Napoleon's fall Spain was worn out. For her, at a time of universal reaction in Europe, no rebirth was possible. She cherished liberal ideas and was consequently torn by bitter intestine struggles and again involved in war with France. This time the French came as mandatories of the Holy Alliance as a result of the Congresses of Laibach and Verona to restore order in Spain, and to instal absolutism in the person of the *rey netto* on the throne. Under the *fleur-de-lys* banner they entered Madrid in triumph to the displeasure of Britain, occupied Cadiz and withdrew only in 1828. Thereby France returned to the ranks of the Great Powers. A few years later the French landed in Africa and captured Algiers. The day that saw the troops of the last Bourbon king storm Constantine, was the day that decided the control of the African coast in favour of France and against Italy and Spain.

In spite of the decline of her power, Spain was still a factor in Europe. When in 1870, because of the candidature for the Spanish crown of a prince of the Catholic branch of the House of Hohenzollern, a new period opened in the history of the struggle for the Rhine and the German Empire took its place in the new balance of power in Europe, the position of Spain was so far improved, for the effect of the French retreat from the Rhine was felt as far as the Guadalquivir. But Spain was soon threatened more seriously overseas than in Iberia. The triumphs of imperialism which at the end of the XIXth century convulsed the world, included a triumph over Spain. The United States deprived her of Porto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines.

With tragic irony the XXth century presented enfeebled Spain with another colonial task. Her geographical position preserved to Spain, from which a handful of adventurers once had won a world, as her last colony a worthless mountainous coast, and compelled her to sacrifice the military and financial strength of the land in Kabylia, while her fortunate rivals, the heirs of her ocean and Mediterranean power, had won richer spoils all over the world.

Many Spanish and Portuguese kings had fought as champions of the Cross on African soil, and the most luckless of all, Sebastian of Portugal, fell in 1578 in the murderous battle of Alcazar, but the ideal of an Ibero-Moorish empire was never clearly formulated. Kabylia was never subdued. The Spanish flag flew over the terraced gardens of the old coastal towns which Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Normans and Arabs had occupied, but was not acknowledged by the Berbers of the mountains. Not until 1860, when Spain defeated the Moors at Tetuan and landed also at Ifni, far to the south on the Atlantic coast, did the African shore from Ceuta to Melilla become the trans-Mediterranean glacis of the Spanish continent.

The Anglo-French Mediterranean *Entente* which, in 1904, laid the foundation for a new grouping of the European Powers and ended in the *Entente cordiale*, compelled Spain to undertake a fresh advance. In a secret treaty France had guaranteed her control of the north of Morocco from the mouth of the Muluja to Serga and so secured her support when Germany at the Algeciras Conference raised objections to French policy in Morocco. Spain speedily became deeply involved in Africa. The entry of the French into Fez led Spain in 1911 to occupy the Atlantic coast in the region of Larache. The Spanish saw themselves recognised as lords of a domain whose southern frontier was not fixed, but was lost somewhere on the crest of the Little Atlas opposite the valleys of the Sebu and the Muluja, while the French pressed stealthily northwards from the great transversal Taza–Fez–Casablanca. In the hills dwelt the many tribes of the Riff Kabyle who refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of the shadow sultan. Pressed between French and Spanish, they could not let themselves be driven from the coast or from the greater inland

waters and after the transference of the Sherifiat to a Franco-Spanish domination, they defended their freedom by their own strength. Spain thus saw herself faced with the task of conquering the mountains from the sea and ruling them in the name of the Sultan if she wished to save them from the French. The strategic position of the Spanish was unfavourable. They occupied the old *presidiós* from Larache to Melilla, overlooked by the enemy and without secure connection, and could scarcely keep the Kabyle from the international zone of Tangier which stuck in the Spanish flank like an arrow and furnished the Moors with weapons and provisions. For Spaniard and Berber there was no escape from this position, but the World War came and years passed before Spain was involved in a life and death struggle on the coast of Larache and at the bays of Alhucemas and Melilla.

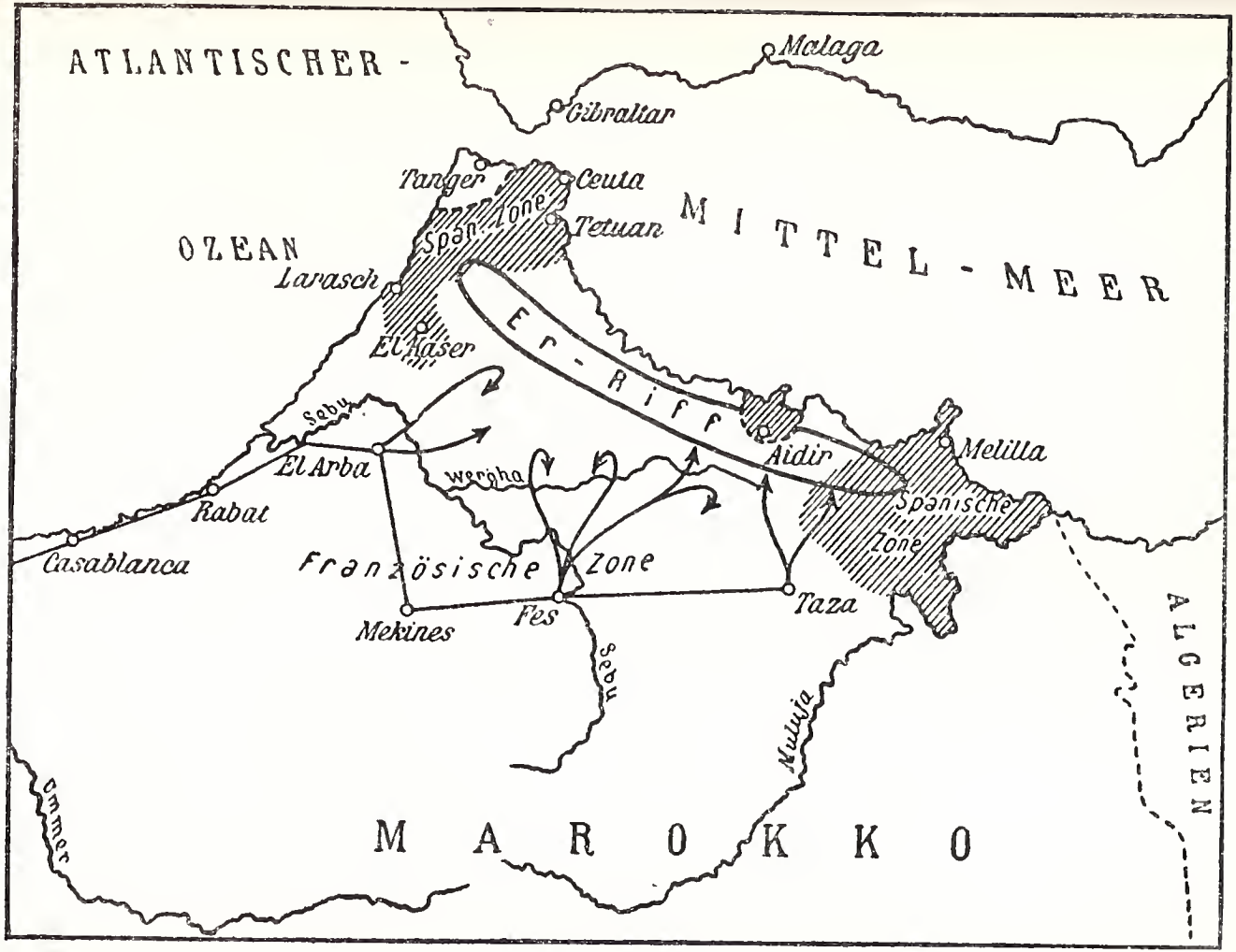
When the World War broke out, Spain stood ready with her front to the south. She maintained her neutrality, but had to interpret that neutrality so favourably to the Powers controlling the sea, that France was able to withdraw her covering forces from the Pyrenees and Britain was able to use Spanish waters. But Spain never fought against Germany and Austria. Portugal did, and in obedience to her British suzerain, sent a corps to Flanders. The British placed the Portuguese divisions at Armentières and here they remained till April 21, 1918, when the last German attack was launched from Lille and scattered them to the winds. Thus it came about that Portugal stood among the victors at Versailles, while all Spain did was to sign the Covenant of the League of Nations.

The result of the World War had changed Spain's position. The power of France to-day casts its shadow over the Pyrenees, the mountains of the African coast, and the Mediterranean and Atlantic Spanish zones as far as the Congo. Spanish Guinea, the islands round Fernando Po, the Rio de Oro and Ifni, the Canaries and the Riff coast of Spanish Morocco, are completely surrounded by the French. In vain, in 1920, did Spain embark on a great campaign for the subjugation of the Kabyle highlanders and the conquest of the zone assigned to her in Morocco, before France, advancing from the transversal Taza–Fez–Casablanca, could reach the Riff watershed. The Moors

opposed a desperate resistance to the advance and at the same time turned to defend themselves on the southern slopes of their hills against the French. When they found a leader in Abd el-Krim, who roused to war all the tribes between the Sebu and the Muluja, the Spanish campaign collapsed. Their columns were driven back to the coast and the old *presidiós*, and Spain saw herself forced to retreat along the whole line. France seized her opportunity and sent her troops from the great depression northwards against the south flank of the Riff position. They crossed the Wergha, established themselves at the southern end of the mountain passes and compelled the tribes there to submit. This operation, defensively conceived but offensively executed, was intended to secure the Taza–Fez line against an inroad of the victorious Riffs, but it has a European rather than a local significance. It happened in 1924, that is, at a time when Britain and France were engaged in the diplomatic struggle over the Rhine and " security," and France had reason to make an impressive display of her power at the entrance to the Mediterranean within sight of Gibraltar.

Spain was equally threatened by the French action, but was forced to make an alliance which placed the Riffs between two fires. She sent fresh troops to Morocco and again advanced against the mountains. The Riff leader saw himself compelled to fight on two fronts and against two opponents who had complete control of the sea. He sought to maintain himself on his interior lines which allowed him to strike north and south and to keep the Spanish to the coast while he defeated the more dangerous foe in the south. But this was too grandiose a conception for his limited strength to realise. The Riffs took a line of fortified posts and on a front of 140 kilometres advanced against the Taza–Fez line but were not strong enough to roll up the broken French front.

In spite of local successes, the French were seriously shaken. They retired on Fez and saw themselves compelled to concentrate troops for a war such as they had not dreamed of. What had been meant as a diversion to disturb Britain had become a serious embarrassment. Consequently, Spain was forced to new sacrifices. It was impossible for her to remain inactive, confined to two exposed and unconnected flank positions on the coast while the French advanced to the water-



THE CONFLICT IN THE RIFF.

shed. Franco-Spanish rivalry transformed itself into a military alliance paradoxical enough in itself and demanding of both partners prodigious efforts.

When France had put 200,000 and Spain 100,000 men in the field against the Riffs, who had only 40,000 men to meet the attack, Abd el-Krim was driven both in the north and the south back to the hills. The Spanish landed at Alhucemas and captured his old capital, Ajdir ; the French recovered the line of the Wergha and in the east pressed on to the watershed. When the rainy season brought the war of movement to an end the Spanish had advanced farther south than ever before. But the success was dearly bought and not won over the real enemy ; the strategic advance of the French was of more serious import than the defeat of the last clan leader.

The pressure of the French on the Spanish zone increases as the resistance of the Kabyle declines. The position of Spain has thus been entirely altered and one day she will have to defend Larache, Ceuta, Tetuan, Ajdir and Melilla, not against the Kabyle but against the French. At that moment the problems of British world dominion and of the future of Spain will be raised together at the entrance to the Mediterranean and the fate be decided of the magic triangle Tangier–Ceuta–Gibraltar in which Spanish, French, Italian and British interests are inextricably entangled.

The campaign which to-day Spain—a land of 20,000,000 inhabitants and fainting under her historic burdens—has to carry on with all her resources on the Moroccan coast loses, when, seen from this viewpoint and considered in the light of the Versailles settlement, the character of an exotic adventure. In the Riff Spain fights for the last defence of her power, now confined to the peninsula. That power, as a result of the destruction of the balance of power in Europe and the French domination of the Rhine, is threatened at its foundations.

CHAPTER XV

THE TRAGEDY OF GREECE

THE historical evolution which takes us from old Hellas to modern Greece is irregular and confused, but it keeps on one great political line. The struggles which the little Hellenic states fought out among themselves, the conflict for supremacy in the Doric-Ionic area, the brilliant attempt to create and maintain a Hellenic balance of power, the thought of a holy alliance of all the Hellenes which received expression in the Amphictyony of the Delphic god, the attack of a superior oriental Power which was beaten off by the united strength of the Hellenic world, the spread of Hellenic teachings and world conceptions over the ancient world, and the creation of a united Hellenic empire by a soldier king of genius, the creation of a universal state system based on a wonderful mixed civilisation, and finally, the fall of this Hellenic creation and its dreams of world empire before the stronger Roman power coming over the sea from the west—all that is, as it were, an early picture of the most recent history of Europe. In these conflicts the most important aspect is the Hellenic conquest of the shores and seas around the Balkan peninsula. That aspect illustrates the geo-political problem which every aspirant to control of the Eastern Mediterranean must face ; it has conditioned the whole historical development and was not solved by the Versailles settlement.

The Aegæan Sea is cut by the two great traffic lines Constantinople–Athens, Salonika–Smyrna. These cross in the latitude of Lesbos, about 50 kilometres west of Eresos. A circle drawn from this point with a radius of 400 kilometres touches Constantinople, Preveza, Cape Matapan, the north coast of Crete and Rhodes, and includes Thrace, South Macedonia and the coast of Anatolia. It completely encloses classical Hellas, but Constantinople, which is the geo-political centre of the Eastern Mediterranean, is banished to the periphery. The Black Sea, Cyprus, Sicily and Calabria, the great colonial spheres of ancient Greece, lie outside the circle. The

power of Greece was always founded on the sea and the idea of a continental empire was never acquired. What Sparta once carried out as a continental policy was only an attempt on the part of an agrarian community to give unity to the insular minor continent of Morea, and the Boeotian policy of Thebes was geographically lost in space. Ancient Greece never thought of conquering the continental area to the north.

The line of conquest ran southwards. The ancestors of the Hellenes arrived from the north as conquerors; the Persians took the same road, and after them the semi-barbarous Macedonians pressed into Thessaly. The hordes of Celts, Germans and Slavs pushed through the valleys of the Vardar, the Struma and the Maritza, and the mountain passes and from the beginning of her history Greece fought at the entrances of a land surrounded by the sea and cut off by hill and gulf from the Balkan continent against foes pressing southward. Under their own standards, under Roman eagles, under Byzantine banners they fought to defend a maritime empire.

Later Hellenism collapsed only after the religious revolt in 727 when it sought to go by sea against Byzantium and drive Leo III, the "Image breaker," from the throne. In the destruction of this expedition, the late classical world is seen for the last time. Shortly afterwards began the Slavisation of the Greek lands, which turned Hellas upside down. In the IXth century Byzantium had to reconquer Greece as if it were a foreign land and recover it for Christendom. The last Slav tribes who, in the old Spartan land at the foot of Taygetus, fought battle after battle against the Imperial generals, were subdued in the middle of the Xth century. Then Greeks, Slavs and Albanians who had wandered south fused to form a new people who infused new strength into the Byzantine empire.

The new Greek empire maintained itself among Bulgars, Serbs, Saracens and Venetians, until Byzantium was made the seat of a Latin empire and numerous petty tyrants were established in Macedonia, Thessaly, Morea, Epirus and the Aegæan Islands. Then under Michael Paleologus, Byzantium bloomed for the last time. When the Serb Tsar, Stephan Dusan, in 1331, knocked at the northern gate of Greece and in a short time conquered Epirus and Thessaly, a new Power seemed

about to arise, but it faded away at Stephan's death. Then came the all-conquering Turk, who conquered the distracted land after severe fighting. Among the Christian peoples, the Greeks from the beginning had a peculiar position. By virtue of the proud tradition of their church, thanks to the preservation of the old autonomous communal government and supported by their supreme intelligence, they preserved their nationality within the Turkish empire and assumed their headship among the Christian Balkan peoples. In no other Balkan people did the flame of nationalism burn so brightly as in the vivacious, passionate Greeks, but this versatile race had, nevertheless, to show itself pliable in the state of subjugation which it now endured. Its intellectual brilliance assured it a share in the government and in the trade of the Ottoman empire such as was denied to the other Balkan peoples. Without the Greeks the old Turkish empire is unthinkable. In the Phanar were found the best diplomatists of the Divan.

The help of Russia was likewise offered to the Greeks in the war for freedom which the Greeks began from the beginning in their relations with the Ottoman, in spite of the place they held in the Turkish state. That help was often deceptive but all disappointments were discounted since the religious feeling created a bond between the peoples which bound Greece inseparably to Tsarist Russia. Greece was Russia's maritime outpost at the gates of the Mediterranean east. The rivalry which arose from the claim of both nations to Constantinople was lessened by the recognition that neither could reap the full harvest of the occupation of the Bosporus without assuring itself of the sympathy of the other. Russia had the idea of freeing Greece in the Russian interest at a time when the Western Powers, Britain and France, were involved in continental wars and Austria contented herself with the occupation of Belgrade.

The attempt to do so was made in the confusion which arose from the first partition of Poland and which led the Russian army in its war with the Confederates of Bar to the Turkish frontier. When Mustafa III recognised the danger and declared war on the Tsarina in order, with the help of the Black Sea Tartars, to drive the Russians back into the steppe, Greece was more deeply involved in the Russo-Turkish

quarrel than any other nation. Catherine II answered the Turkish move in the spirit of Peter, summoned the Christian Balkan peoples to revolt and attacked on two fronts. When a Russian squadron, led by British officers, left the Baltic and in the spring of 1768 appeared off the Greek coast, Turkey was caught between two fires. The fleet landed troops in Laconia and destroyed a Turkish squadron at Tchesme, but the revolt of the Greeks on the mainland was drowned in blood by the Janissaries and Albanian volunteers. The great expedition ended with the bombardment of the Dardanelles forts, where French officers stood behind the guns and exchanged broadsides with the British-officered Russian frigates. When the war was ended in 1774 by the Peace of Kütchük-Kainardji, the Greeks received nothing save an amnesty, religious freedom and a certain freedom of movement, privileges which were soon forgotten by the Porte, while Russia won the mouth of, and freedom of transit on, the Dnieper. In the competition for Constantinople Russia was constantly superior to the Greeks, not merely in material resources, but in strategic position and in moral influence. She assumed the protectorate over all the Christian peoples without assuming any obligations towards them, and had won the Dnieper glacis and the Black Sea roadstead. But the Greeks refused to be turned aside from their predestined way. They were soon driven to a new rebellion, but were disowned by Russia in the Peace of Jassy in 1792 and were granted only the noteworthy privilege of voyaging freely under the Russian flag. They owed to this the extension of their commerce over the whole Levant, even if they were at the same time advertisers of Russia's power, since Russian colours waved on Greek ships in all the Turkish waters.

Greece flew the Russian flag till the great war of independence. The war had its origin in a rising in 1821 started by banished patriots in Bessarabia. Greek heroism and Greek party strife together celebrated their resurrection. Hellas and the Aegæan were once again the scene of a war which covered the old battlefields with new dead. Crete, Morea, Attica, Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia shared in the rising ; on all the islands and all the Asia Minor and Thracian coast the Greek population took up arms. The Turks merci-

lessly suppressed the revolt, but could not completely extinguish the flame of insurrection. When the Patriarch Georgios died a martyr's death in Constantinople in 1821, the movement changed from a political revolt to a war of religion. The Greek ships hauled down the Russian flag and fought the Turkish battle fleet under the flag of freedom. The Greek volunteers aided by European Philhellenes desperately held at bay the Turkish regulars and the Albanians. All Europe watched the war feverishly while officially the Powers turned their backs upon it until the whole East threatened to be involved in the conflagration.

Western Europe was speedily involved. When Nicholas I ascended the Russian throne and made ready to attack Turkey, Britain decided to come to an understanding with France and Russia on the matter of intervention. This is the first attempt at an amiable delimitation of British, French and Russian interests in the East. Austria let slip the opportunity to enter the three-Power negotiation. When in 1830 Greece became a sovereign state under the protection of these Powers she possessed at once the ineradicable tendency to disintegrating political strife and the unquenchable hope of extending her sway over the Levant. She pressed forward to the conquest of the Aegæan and the surrounding coasts.

As the sea no longer belonged to the Hellenes but was in the power of the British, the Greeks in the XIXth century thought of an advance on Constantinople by land and the conquest of Thessaly, Epirus and Thrace. The conditions for such an advance were co-operation with the Serbs and Bulgars, English protection for the rear, French sympathy, Russian aid, a gigantic exertion of their own strength and the awaiting of an unknown moment. Its achievement lay in the dark future and two Greek dynasties fell without a solution of the problem it presented being found.

On August 8, 1832, the Greek National Assembly elected as king of the Hellenes Otto of Bavaria, under the protection of Britain, France and Russia. Otto ruled over his passionate people for thirty years. When he, in 1862, left Greece, which had turned against him because he could neither stop the strife of parties nor satisfy the national desire for an extension of the kingdom, the protecting Powers recommended as his successor

Prince George of Denmark. United in the endeavour to maintain their influence, but nevertheless each anxious to gain the advantage over the others and make Greece serve its interests, Russia, France and Britain watched over the young and struggling state. Britain gave it the Ionian Islands because she did not know what else to do with them, but apart from this the natural expansion of the Greek state was terribly hampered by the maritime situation of Greece, by the presence of other nationalities in the districts near the Greek frontiers and the rivalry of the Great Powers for supremacy in the eastern Mediterranean. Neither the Crimean War nor the war in Italy opened up new prospects to Greece. When her most important outwork, Crete, rose against Turkey in 1868, a great eastern war threatened to result from this Greco-Turkish quarrel. Bismark, however, called a conference of the signatory states of the Paris Congress in order to avoid one and found the Powers willing to listen to him. Greece, conscious of her weakness, submitted to the Powers who, in 1869, peremptorily ordered her to keep the peace. This was the Prussian statesman's first attempt to intervene in the Eastern question and to show the influence of the North German Confederation on the balance of power in Europe. In February 1869 the Greco-Turkish crisis was over, but the real Eastern crisis had not been resolved. Seven years later the rising of the Serbs called the Balkans to arms. Greece put an army of 120,000 men in the field to secure a hearing for her national demands and public opinion clamoured for the union of Crete, Thessaly and Epirus with the Motherland.

When Russia declared war on Turkey and marched on Adrianople the moment for Greece to attack seemed to have come. But Britain stood in the way. Beaconsfield declared that, if the Greek army moved, he would blockade Peiræus. All Greece boiled up in rage, but because of the British threat, had to let the strategic moment pass by. Only when Plevna fell, did they risk a movement, but before their weak advance corps had completed its deployment Turkey laid down her arms. The Greek campaign ended before it had begun. On the order of the Powers the Greek troops withdrew.

The Berlin Congress had nothing left to give to the tardy. It exempted the Porte from compulsory surrender of territory

to Greece and was content to suggest a frontier rectification in Epirus and Thessaly. Turks and Greeks were instructed to negotiate in amity and the towns of Janina and Larissa were indicated as possible sacrifices. That sacrifice was too great for the Porte, though not worth risking the whole peace of the Balkans to refuse; the gains too small for the Greeks to cause them to take extreme measures. Listlessly both states prepared for war. Britain then, for the sake of her own maritime interests, became friendlier to Greece and supported the French suggestion that the frontier might be advanced to the crests of Olympus and Pindus. Greece agreed, for the proposal gave her the sally port of Thessaly and the flank position of Epirus, but Turkey perceived the strategic danger to her base of operations in Macedonia and refused. Again it looked like war. The Concert of the Powers was in confusion and each strove against the other. Britain and France supported Greece and left her liberty of action; Germany and Austria advised her to keep the peace. Russia stood angrily aside.

The Porte declared itself ready to negotiate with the Powers on the settlement of the Greek frontiers and ultimately gave up Thessaly and South Epirus. The Concert assented and Greece accepted the settlement which advanced her frontier to the Salambria and the Arta. Only a tiny part of the road to the goal had been traversed, but the moral gain was great. The pan-Hellenic ideal in these difficult days had become the property of the whole nation and at the same time a European problem. It was still certainly but a phase of the Balkan problem, but already it had begun to part company with the pan-Slav ideal and gave Greece in the war for the Dardanelles an individual claim based on a tradition of twenty centuries. Every movement in the neighbouring Slav states, every conflict which brought Turkey into difficulties, found a manifold echo in Greece and in the islands and coastal areas inhabited by a genuinely Greek population.

When in 1885 Bulgaria secured Eastern Rumelia, not only the Serbs but the Greeks demanded compensation for this disturbance of the Balkan equilibrium. Again a Greek corps advanced into Thessaly and again the Great Powers for the sake of the peace of Europe trod out the glowing brand. Ten

years passed before Greece escaped from the restraint placed on her and in spite of financial difficulties staked all on an invasion of Macedonia. The war was kindled at the flame of the Cretan insurrection, which was subdued but never quenched, and became a pan-Hellenic crusade for the salvation of the Greeks oppressed by the Balkan Slavs of the Continent who, since the Russo-Turkish war, had been pressing seawards. The moment was worse chosen than ever before and the campaign encountered strategic difficulties which would have embarrassed a stronger and better prepared Power. The Greeks, besides, delayed and let undisciplined bands move first. The Porte was encouraged to make a counter-attack, broke through the Meluna gap into Thessaly, defeated the Greeks at Larissa and drove them back over Thermopylæ. The Greek campaign collapsed.

The Great Powers saved Thessaly for the vanquished, contented the Porte with the payment of an indemnity and gave Greece a debt administration. Serbs and Bulgars rejoiced at the Greek defeat, which left them greater scope for their own claims to Macedonia. Even Russia, a protecting state, having come to terms with Austria for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans, was pleased.

As the result of this unfortunate campaign, Greece saw herself reduced to the servitude of foreign debt and cheated of her pan-Hellenic ambitions. Salonika, the first great stage in the advance by land, the maritime key position for the domination of Macedonia and the Thracian coast, had not been reached, and the Serb and Bulgar threat was more serious than before. Greece did not let herself be discouraged. No renunciation followed her disillusion, and when the latent eastern crisis came to a head ten years later, when the Young Turks overthrew Abdul Hamid, when Austria annexed Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and Russia bound the Christian Balkan states still closer to herself in order to bring to a decisive issue the conflict with her old rival for the hegemony in the Balkans now lost by the Ottomans, the Hellenes again gathered themselves together for action. This time they prepared deliberately and surrounded themselves with allies and friends. No more did Greece go to war in isolation; she went under the ægis of Russia and with Serbs and Bulgars for allies. Friendly

relations with Germany and Austria protected her from com plications and the complaisance of the Western Powers was protection to her flanks and rear. Only with Italy could she find no common ground. Since Italy had invaded Turkey in order to win Tripolitana, left over from the old Turkish empire by France and Britain, there was enmity between the two old Mediterranean Powers. The entrance of Italy into the Aegæan, the occupation of Rhodes and the attack on the Dardanelles by the Italian fleet was regarded by Greece as an invasion of Greek territory. The Greeks did not turn against the intruder, whose strength was superior to her own and who was regarded with friendly eyes by the Western coalition, but increased the zone of conflict and, allied to the Serbs and the Bulgars, fell upon shaken Turkey.

Maritime Greece saw herself forced again to conduct a campaign on land, but for the first time she fought covered. When, in the autumn of 1912, the Greeks formed the right wing of the Balkan coalition, they made not a frontal, but a flank attack on the hereditary enemy, which was threatened with a double envelopment. This time the attack from the Olympus passes was successful. The Greeks defeated the Turkish frontier guards at Elassona, on the Maritza and on the Vardar, broke the defensive flank of the enemy, held and beaten by the Serbs and Bulgars, and reached Salonika before their allies. On November 8, 1913, the town fell without a blow into their hands. On that day Greece was summoned to hold the supremacy on the Aegæan. The old Greek islands, Crete, Thasos, Imbros, Lemnos, Tenedos, Samothrace, Lesbos and Chios hoisted the Greek flag and on the Ionian and Thracian coast men dreamed of the coming day. When Janina fell, the future of Greater Greece seemed secured. But success confronted Greece with a graver problem. If the capture of Salonika had produced something like a resurrection of the Thessalonican empire, which had arisen in the XIIIth century after the establishment of the Latin empire on the foundations of the classical Macedonian kingdom of Philip II, Greece would have had to fight the Serbs in order to secure the west Macedonian and the Epirote–Albanian hinterland and force the Serbs over the Shardagh. But there was no question of that. The Greeks fought as the allies of the Serbs and were

seeking the road to Byzantium ; Salonika was but a stage in the advance to Constantinople. Consequently, they joined the Serbs to resist the Bulgar claims. They crossed the Vardar, began to advance between the hills and the Aegæan towards Kavalla and in the second Balkan war when Greek and Serb fought the Bulgar won the Struma valley.

The third stage of the political advance to Constantinople was reached. The Peace of Bucharest gave Greece South Macedonia, Salonika and Kavalla. Practically the whole Aegæan Archipelago was won and also the Thracian coast from the Vardar to the Mesta. The maritime idea had triumphed, but the Macedonian question was not thereby solved. The Turk had thrown it as an apple of discord among the allies when he retired before superior forces to Tchataldja. Pan-Hellenic, Great-Serbian and Great-Bulgarian claims were now opposed. Had the Bulgars not turned the full force of their hate against the Serbs the Greeks would not have won their gains so easily. But even without the knowledge of that fact, there came soon the realisation that they could not resume the advance by land relying solely on their own strength and only as a Balkan event, and that the storm gathering on the European horizon threatened their new possessions. When a year later the world went up in flames, Macedonia became the eastern base of operations of the *Entente*, and Salonika the fulcrum of the Great War. Greece lost her sovereignty to the Allied Powers, who used her territory to threaten east and west on the flank and to force her against her will into the war.

Greece bore the burden which her protectors placed upon her with groaning patience and seized the moment when the scales inclined in favour of the *Entente* to enter the war. When Bulgaria collapsed, Greece saw the road open to the east. The advance on Constantinople brought the Greeks from the Mesta to the Maritza and the Treaty of Sèvres gave her Thrace. She stood at the gates of Constantinople.

The day for the resurrection of the Greek empire seemed to have arrived. Russia was no longer a competitor ; Britain and France, in spite of the founding of the League of Nations and the influence of a four years' comradeship in arms, were in the East more opposed than before the war. Turkey appeared

no longer capable of resistance, and so Greece risked war. Under cover of the relations between France and Britain, she sought a decision in Asia Minor and Thrace. It was a Homeric battle. As at Troy the immortals in the clouds protected the Greek and Trojan warriors and guided their spears, so the Greeks of the XXth century fought the Turks, blessed and strengthened respectively by Britain and France. British hopes accompanied the Greeks on their able campaign which was fought out far from Greece on the Ionian coast and the Anatolian hills. Initial successes deluded the Greeks, until the Turks, accompanied by France's good wishes and furnished with munitions by Russia, counter-attacked from their last defences and broke the long Greek front. Then all was over with this superhuman effort of the Greek race. Their army was rolled up in two directions, the main body beaten, thrown back on burning Smyrna and driven into the sea. Capitulation saved the wrecks of the Greek host from annihilation.

In vain Greece sought to save at least the Thracian glacis. The Ottoman remained master of Gallipoli and the eastern bank of the Maritza and drove the Greeks from Adrianople. It was more than a lost war ; it was a catastrophe which threw Greece into a new revolution. The Danish dynasty followed the Bavarian into exile and with the curse of the lost war upon it left a land torn by faction. Over one million Greeks—nearly one-fifth of the Greek race—the Turk, supported by the treaty of peace, drove from Asia Minor, exchanging them for Turkish exiles from Macedonia and Thrace. When Italy shortly after attacked the weak Greek state and bombarded Corfu because Italian officers who were delimiting the Albanian frontiers had been murdered by bandits on Greek territory the weakness of Greece lay patent to all. In spite of that, Greece remains immovably fixed in the maritime area between the Adriatic and the Dardanelles and on all the coasts of the Levant.

Greece was the first victim of the Versailles settlement, but her will to live is unbroken. The unrest which is in her blood is not only part of the national character but is based on the conditions created at Versailles. In the autumn of 1925 it was shockingly manifested in the Greco-Bulgarian conflict

which culminated in the bombardment of Petritch. This time Greece was the stronger Power and, being so, followed the example of France and Italy. As France in the struggle for the Rhine set her armies in motion in time of peace in order to seize the Ruhr; as Italy, in order to give an impressive display of her power, bombarded Corfu in time of peace, so in time of peace Greece sent in the night a division over the Bulgarian frontier into the Strumnitza valley and burned Bulgar villages in order to demand compensation for a few stray shots exchanged by Greek and Bulgar frontier guards. When disarmed Bulgaria appealed to the League of Nations, the Greeks agreed to retreat. The incident not only showed again that under the League of Nations *régime* a method has been discovered whereby a state can use the weapon of war without being in a state of war or being the aggressor—France in the Ruhr is the classic example—but also again brought into the foreground of the Balkan-Levantine stage the Macedonian question, ignored at Versailles and still unsolved.

At Bucharest and Versailles Bulgaria was deprived of the historical rights which she claimed in Macedonia, but the Macedonian propagandists have not recognised the peace settlement. Macedonia demands the erection of the partitioned country into an independent state and Bulgaria is ready to recognise this solution. It is clear that Jugoslavia and Greece oppose it because Macedonia has been partitioned between them, but the partition has exposed both to danger. Jugoslavia feels herself threatened on the Vardar and seeks to secure the Strumnitza valley before Bulgars and Greeks. Greece trembles for Salonika and Kavalla, since Serbs and Bulgars command the plain from the heights and from the Vardar and Strumnitza valleys. Greece is in the least secure position of the three. She knows it and she is irritable and uneasy. She feels that her flank march from Salonika to Constantinople is threatened by the Serbs and Bulgars and fears the victorious Turks whom she sought in vain to eject from Gallipoli. The catastrophe she suffered before Smyrna could be repeated under the walls of Salonika. The Serbs, who are to-day satisfied with the concession of a free zone and control of a railway, are capable of suddenly moving against

THE SOUTHERN BALKANS AND THE AEGÆAN.

the centre of gravity of their policy to the south and of marching in Dushan's steps against Thessalonica. The Bulgars, who to-day are trampled under foot, might rise again to-morrow and, protected by Turkey on their flank, advance from the Rhodope to conquer the Aegæan coast.

The struggle for the hegemony of the Balkans is not over. Greece toils on the hill of Sisyphus. The tragedy of it is that this maritime nation whose genius for trade has ruled the Homeric sea since Venice's trade supremacy perished, moves step by step on land and fed on classical memories has been compelled to establish herself in the Bulgarian area in order to approach Byzantium, and that the first great attempt to use the sea as an offensive base and encompass the Dardanelles on two sides failed on the plain of Troy and on the Anatolian hills. One's memory goes back to 727. . . .

The Greek nation, which sees Britain still in possession of Cyprus and Italy holding Rhodes, fights still for the maritime area which is the support of her peninsular position and remains still dependent on the aid of Britain, whose maritime supremacy is politically anchored in Peiræus. Smyrna is lost, Salonika is threatened, and the road to Constantinople is not open.

CHAPTER XVI

OLD AND NEW TURKEY AND THE EASTERN QUESTION

At the end of the XIIIth century the Turks knocked at the gates of the West. At that time the last glory of the Hohenstaufens was dying in Sicily, French and Spaniards were warring on the Italian coasts in the quarrels between Peter of Aragon and Charles of Anjou, Michael Palaeologus had rescued Byzantium from the chaos of the Latin empire and the Greek despotisms, and the Seljuks, who had held the Arabo-Persian area under their sceptre, were sinking. The Turks took from the weak hands of the Seljuks of Iconium the overlordship of Asia Minor. They left the pasture land which the Seljuk Kai Kobad had given them round Angora and under Osman founded their own kingdom in the hills of Anatolia and on the bank of the Bosporus. When Osman took Brusa a way was opened to new lands. The eastern question which came down to us from the heroic age of Greece and which in mediæval times wore a Byzantine mask now became a European one. The peninsula of the Balkans and Anatolia were united against the West. The day Osman's people entered Thrace the Oriental question became one side of the general European problem, the Rhine problem being the other, and these two have determined the course of European history. It is noteworthy that in 1444 the French appeared before Bâle and Strasbourg; in 1453 Mohammed took Constantinople.

The capture of Constantinople gave the two peninsulas their natural capital and placed the line connecting the Aegæan and the Black Sea in the hands of a young, strong and warlike people, which had still sufficient nomad blood in it not to need the impulse of Islam to set its armies in motion against Europe. As long as the military state of the Turks was under strong Sultans and strong Viziers, the Turks lived for, and by, war. It is therefore dangerous to regard as a solution of the eastern question this creation of the Ottoman empire on the Bosporus and its expansion over an area stretching from the

Caucasus to the Atlas and from the Spanish plain to the coasts of the Arabian gulf. The Turkish wars are campaigns to create a strategic unity. They are comparable to the wars which from Cæsar's campaigns on the Rhône to the Great War have been fought for the possession of the Rhineland. As the Romans sought to reach the Elbe to secure the Rhine frontier and the French desired the Rhine to secure the left bank as a base of operations, so the Turks advanced over the Danube and the Dnieper to make the Dardanelles ever safer and rule East and West from a central position. The Danube campaign of Darius, the campaigns of Alexander, the struggle of Byzantium for the Danube and the Gulf of Alexandretta and the sketch left of the eastern designs of Napoleon are all inspired by the same thought.

When the Turks crossed the Dardanelles and set foot on Europe at Adrianople, they saw themselves faced with the conquest of an area which falls into two sections. The Rumelian farmland and the Macedonian plain lay alluringly before the glacis of the Thracian steppe, while the Illyro-Greek hill country bars the way to an invader coming from the east. The strategic advance of the Ottomans was thereby decided. It followed the great gaps through which the Balkan rivers flow or went over high and precipitous passes. Two lines separate the Balkans from the strategical point of view. They follow the great valleys which pass through the farmland as meridianal and diagonal connecting lines and connect the Aegæan and the Propontis with the continental mass of Europe. In the one, the Morava and the Vardar flows, in the other, the Maritza. The lines meet at Nish and here opponents meet for the decisive battle. Kossovo, Pirot and Alexinatz are the battlefields around Nish. The Jugo-slavs, who to-day hold this region, occupy a centrally-secured defensive and offensive position, but from it they command neither Belgrade nor Skutari, neither Sofia nor Salonika. The two main gaps of the Balkan peninsula which meet in the sector Belgrade–Nish are marked to-day by the railway lines Belgrade - Nish - Uskub - Salonika and Belgrade–Nish–Sofia–Philippopolis–Adrianople, appear as lines of passage, not as lines radiating from a central position. They are determined by their termini. Of these, Constantinople has the dominant

position. By relating it to these the struggle for Skutari, for Belgrade, for Salonika, for Adrianople is seen in its true form.

Constantinople lies apart from the main mass of the Balkans but its continental and maritime central position between the South European and West Asian peninsulas is determined by the direction of the main valleys and of the Balkan lines of communication which these in their turn determine. This geographically-determined system of strategic lines fixes the destiny of the Balkan peninsula. The lack of a great central plain, the confusion of narrow enclaves—plateau or valley—and the linking of the natural lines of communication with the eccentric Constantinople give the master of the Straits predominance in the struggle for the mastery of the Balkans.

When the Ottoman Empire was at its height, the Turks held this supremacy so long as they could put in the field enough warriors to fight against Austria, Russia and the whole Christian population. After an obstinate struggle they fell before the Great Powers and the national awakening of the Balkan peoples, but they have returned to Asia to the last sources of their national strength and have not surrendered the cardinal point of the south-eastern European fortress nor its Thracian glacis.

Turkey in the World War fought shoulder to shoulder with Germany on four fronts and held at bay Russia in the Caucasus, Britain in Irak, Sinai and Syria, and France and Britain at the Dardanelles. She fell only when the Syrian front was broken by superior numbers. The fall of Damascus was the last move in a lost game. Mustafa Kemal on October 25, 1918, withdrew with the wrecks of the Syrian army from Aleppo to the hill country of Marata-Halebli in order to defend from the flank the Taurus passes and the entrance to Anatolia. He was still standing there defiant when, six days later, the Porte capitulated and opened the Dardanelles. Thereupon, undefeated, he withdrew with 15,000 men *via* Adana and Konia to Angora.

The war was over. In the East gigantic booty lay before the *Entente* and they hastened to divide it. The Cabinets of London, Paris and Petrograd had agreed as early as May 1916 to divide the possessions of the sick man. Russia received the Bosporus, Armenia and South Kurdistan; France, Syria,

Cilicia and West Kurdistan; Britain, Mesopotamia and Arabia. When in 1917 Italy threatened to revolt if a share of the plunder was not assured to her, the Powers, by the agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne promised her Smyrna and Adalia. It was an unscrupulous imperialist partition, but it was never realised. The departure of Russia forced the Western Powers to make a new division of the spoils of war. Italy was directed towards Austria and authorised to advance to the Brenner, Greece took Russia's position in Asia Minor, and the British and French shares were brought into relation with the Rhine problem and divided on that principle.

The Rhine problem and the Dardanelles problem are really a single problem. But the Western Powers brought no order out of the chaos they had created. They used the problem only for moves and counter-moves in order to put each other in check. Their relations had become antagonistic because of France's advance to the Rhine, and this antagonism was decisive both in the West and in the East. When America repudiated Wilson's signature, rejected the Versailles Peace and abandoned Armenia, the mandate for which had been offered her, new confusion arose which could not be reduced to order. And so it came about that Turkey recovered her poise again. But she only just escaped being a mere object of Anglo-French policy. The Greeks, too, saw themselves called to play a new part. Greece was selected as a buffer state in order to separate the Great Powers from what was left of Turkey. Pan-Hellenism believed its hour had come. On May 29, 1919, the Greeks landed at Smyrna and occupied, as the dependent partner of the great alliance and by order of the *Entente*, the chief commercial town of the Ionian coast. Then the Turks suddenly ceased to yield to *Kismet* and rose in insurrection. Kemal summoned a national congress at Erzerum. The patriots agreed to defend Eastern Anatolia and bound themselves by the National Pact which served as basis for the restoration of the old empire. In vain, Britain and France sought to turn the course events were taking. When the Armenians advanced on Erzerum to fight for their own nation and the *Entente*, and the French dismissed the British garrisons in Cilicia and Syria, the banished patriots in the Anatolian hills renounced allegiance to the Sultan. The

Western Powers did not know what to make of this phenomenon. They thought their position secure since the Sultan and the Divan were submissive, and played the dictator on the Golden Horn. Despite their mutual distrust and intrigue, British, French and Italian contingents occupied towns and palaces and dissolved the Turkish Parliament, which had adhered to the National Pact, at the point of the bayonet on March 16, 1920. British warships trained their guns on the city and compelled the Caliph to expel the Anatolian patriots from the community of the faithful.

Then the bow, bent too far, snapped. Kemal answered the challenge, ordered new elections and summoned the National Assembly to meet at Angora. When on May 11, 1920, the representatives of the *Entente* handed the Treaty of Sèvres to the Turkish envoys in Paris, a treaty which left to the Ottomans only Constantinople and north-western Anatolia, the rebellion in Anatolia took on the character of a national resurrection.

The *Entente* trusted in the tool which, in the spirit of the Versailles settlement, they intended to use and bade the Greeks advance from Smyrna and Dedeagatch on Constantinople and the Sea of Marmara in order to compel the Porte to accept the dictated peace. The threat produced quick results. On August 10th, the Porte signed the rapacious treaty; the great partition had been accomplished—on paper. The horn of plenty overflowed over great and small. The Kurds and Armenians were called to found states of their own; the Greeks received Eastern Thrace and Gallipoli and were confirmed in the possession of Smyrna. France took possession of Syria and Cilicia and extended its sphere of influence from Adana to Sivas and Diarbekir. Britain took Sinai, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Arabia, while Italy renewed her claims to a zone in south-western Anatolia. The Sultan had sunk to be the gate-keeper of the Bosporus.

Anatolian Turkey gathered itself together for a last effort. The National Assembly summoned Anatolia to arms. Kemal Pasha took the offensive. He directed his first blow at the weakest point and advancing from his strategic key position destroyed the advancing Armenians on the old battlefield on the Armenian plateau. The Armenians were driven from

Kars and Artwin to the Caucasus railway at Alexandropol and to the Black Sea at Batum. By December 3rd all was over. The Armenians sued for peace. They were deprived of what strength they had and left Kars and Ardahan in Turkish hands. Kemal changed his front and advanced on the interior line towards the Sea of Marmara in order to attack the Greeks on the line Adabazar–Eskichehr–Afiun Karahissar. All Anatolia rose. In the hills above the Black Sea, in Cilicia, in Kurdistan there was fighting, but it was no longer the death struggle of a falling empire but the resurrection of a nation that had been buried alive.

Angora from being a nest of rebels became the centre of a new state which won power and respect overnight, waged war and made treaties, and smashed the hostile political front even before it obtained a decision in the field. Russia, in exchange for the restoration of Batum, opened the arsenals of the Caucasus to the hereditary enemy who was now her friend; France, terrified at the Cilician reverses and left in the lurch by Britain on the Rhine, retreated at Adana. Italy, too, avoided participating in a game which had become dangerous. She had sent an expeditionary force to Rhodes but never risked it and after a weak effort renounced the South Anatolian coast in order to barter for Jubaland.

Britain thought differently. She believed in the success of the Greeks and held to the belief that the Turkish empire was based on, and so vulnerable at, the Bosporus. Lloyd George urged the King of the Hellenes to advance in the spring to the Sakkaria against Angora. Constantine obeyed, against his own superior strategical judgment, in order not to disappoint the high hopes of his people. He saw himself called to fulfil the programme of Veniselos, which knew no limits. The Greeks in April advanced from the line Eskichehr–Afiun Karahissar, fought their way across the broken Anatolian plateau and by early autumn were approaching the glacis of Angora. Then the Turks counter-attacked. They drove their exhausted foes on the line Eskichehr–Afiun Karahissar and pinned them to the lower course of the Sakkaria. By the autumn the Greek offensive had collapsed along the whole front.

France rightly estimated the situation and changed sides. She recognised the Anatolian Government and made an agree-

ment with Angora by which Cilicia was given back to the Turks and the frontier of the French sphere ran from the Gulf of Alexandretta eastwards to Dzesireh-ibn-Omar on the Tigris. It was the decisive move in the game. The Anglo-French alliance in the East was dissolved. Britain had opposed France on the Rhine ; France abandoned Britain at the Dardanelles.

In vain, Lloyd George, arguing from a maritime standpoint, sought to rule the course of events from Constantinople and use the Greeks as mercenaries, while he created the mirage of a Hellenic state on the Black Sea and infused new life into the Greek armies. Constantine defended himself in his Anatolian trenches and the Greek reserve army advanced from the Maritza against Tchataldja, but no defensive, no diversion, was of any avail. The Turks issued orders now, and it was they who fixed the time and place of the decisive battle. It was fought on August 25, 1922, between the Sea of Marmara and the plateau of Konia on the western slopes of the Anatolian hill country. The Turks attacked the Greek lines, broke through the long front, and in a grim pursuit drove their desperate foes from the Sakkaria on Ismid, Brusa and Ushak on the Sea of Marmara and along the old Ionian military highways to Smyrna. The Greek army melted away and reached the sea and the ships that were its salvation just in time to avoid being cut off. On September 9th the Turks were at burning Smyrna. On October 11th Angora granted the beaten enemy the armistice of Mudania, which saved what was left of the army from annihilation. The Greeks sailed back to Greece and buried all their hopes.

The Treaty of Sèvres was torn up and the first great breach was made in the Versailles settlement. Turkey arose in new form. As a National State she roused herself to creative activity, turned the Sultanate into a republic and abolished the Turkish caliphate. Her representatives appeared at the Peace Conference at Lausanne and sat down at the green table with the Powers. The treaty which was signed on August 24, 1923, between the rebel Turkey and the Versailles dictators was the result of negotiations which were a confession that Turkey had arisen again. It compelled the Western Powers to withdraw from Anatolia to Syria and Mesopotamia and the Greeks from the Dardanelles and Adrianople to the Maritza.

Turkey was left master of Eastern Thrace, Constantinople and Gallipoli with the islands of Samothrace, Imbros and Tenedos and the whole Asia Minor massif with the Black Sea and Aegæan coasts. The inland frontier in Asia ran in the east from the mouth of the Chorik over the watershed between Lake Van and Lake Urmia southward; in the south as agreed upon in the Turko-French agreement from the Gulf of Alexandretta eastwards to Dzesireh-ibn-Omar on the Upper Tigris, but the section where both lines would meet in South Turkestan was not finally delimited. The fate of Mosul remained in suspense. The vilayet of Mosul into which the British had advanced as the protectors of the kingdom of Irak was steadfastly defended by Turkey in the field, at the conference table and before the meeting of the League Council summoned by Britain. Turkey refused the Council's decision which gave Britain the whole vilayet as mandated territory although the territory in question was not surrendered territory but a Turkish possession, while the League further violated Article 22 of its Covenant. As the decision which was given in December 1925 was based on the compromise made between France and Britain at Locarno and in London Britain was guaranteed against French action. This strengthened her position in negotiating.

The dispute struck at the roots of the new Turkey. The Turks, who have buried their European past on the banks of the Bosporus and the Maritza and have loyally neutralised Constantinople and the Dardanelles, at Mosul fought for their future in Asia. They fought for the gates of South Turkestan and the line Rowanduz–Suleimanya which commands the south-western approaches of Persia, fought for the great oil resources which are hidden in the Tigris valley and for entry into the plain.

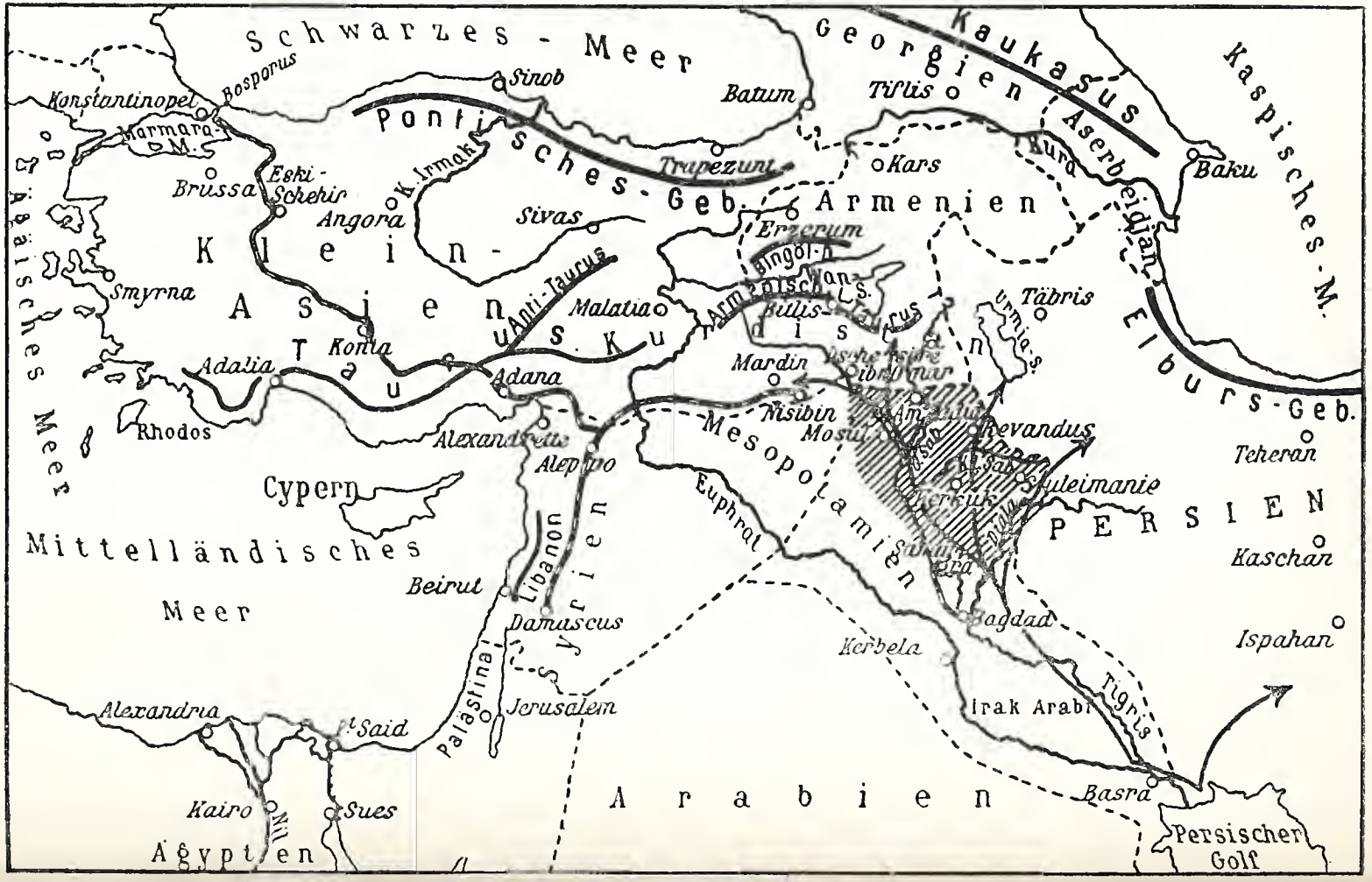
Turks and British stand opposite one another on a line which since historical times has been contested by North and South. All the Mesopotamian empires pressed northwards in order to establish themselves on the first ridge of the Anatolian massif; all the possessors of Anatolia and Persia sought to win here entry to the open river land. The war in most cases ended with a victory of the North. No ruler of the plain was strong enough to extend his power over the Asia

Minor massif to the Black Sea; even the wave of Arab Islam was broken on the Anatolian hills. There is more innate strength in the advance from the north, but it is dependent on conditions for success. If the land of the two rivers is defended by warrior nations, it recoils at the Mesopotamian frontier; if not, the attack of the north goes forward to the Red Sea and the Nile valley.

The northern frontier of the great Semitic-Babylonian empire, which in the IVth millennium B.C. had its base on the two rivers, ran approximately along the line Alexandretta–Biredjik–Mardin–Dzesireh; in the XVIth century B.C. the frontier of Assyria followed pretty much the same line and only at the end of the VIIIth century B.C. was it advanced in the time of Sargon to Tarsus in the Taurus range and deep into the region where the two rivers have their source. The Babylonian kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar II withdrew to the Mardin line and the Abbasids, who carried the Prophet's standard to the Black Sea, were at the end of the Xth century A.D. driven by the Byzantines back over the Taurus to the line Aleppo–Nisibin–Van–Erivan. Byzantium maintained this line of defence until the Seljuks overran Iran and breaking in on the east rolled up the south front of the Byzantine empire from the flank.

To-day the Turks are north of the Byzantine frontier which the Seljuk leader, Toghril Beg, marching southwards broke through in the Armenian uplands. They press southward from Lake Van and take up their position on the Gulf of Alexandretta only under compulsion, since they have been deprived on strategic and economic grounds of the natural flank protection and the glacis of the southern front. The outer edge of this south front is marked by a line passing through Alexandretta, Aleppo, Meskene, Rakka, Beled-Sinjar, Mosul and Kerkuk. From Alexandretta to Beled-Sinjar, therefore, the south front is in the hands of the French; from Beled-Sinjar to Kerkuk in the hands of the British. The Turks stand accordingly on the Bagdad railway which runs some 50 kilometres to 100 kilometres further north, not on the glacis but at the foot of the main wall of the Anatolian fortress and are threatened on both flanks.

When in 1924 the Kurds rose against Angora, Kemal did



MOSUL AND THE BRITISH LINES OF ATTACK IN IRAK.

not send his troops over the hills against Diarbekir, which as the crow flies is 750 kilometres from Angora, but asked the French to permit them to pass through Aleppo as is laid down in the Turko-French agreement. France fulfilled her pledge and the Turkish battalions went on the Anatolian railway *via* Konia, Adana and Aleppo to Jerebilis and Nisibin in order to march into Kurdistan from the south and quell the rising which, in the European chancelleries, was hailed as the prelude to the battle for Mosul and threatened to give Britain not only Mosul but also the vilayets of Diarbekir and Hakkiari.

On the Tigris the Turks fought to secure their vulnerable corner position. On the Maritza and the Balkan passes before Greeks and Bulgars, on the Armenian plateau before Armenians and Russians, on the Amanus range before French and Syrians, they stand in a stronger position than before British and Arab Irakis in front of Mosul and Suleimanya. They cannot do without the mountain flank which stretches from Mosul *via* Rowanduz to Suleimanya without losing their bases in the mountain area which runs from the highlands of Malatia to the snow peaks of Hakkiari. When, in the summer of 1924, the British, after severe fighting with the native populations, secured the line Suleimanya–Rowanduz in order, as the mandatory of the League of Nations and protector of Irak, to create a *fait accompli* and to have in their possession the oil districts and the entrances to Persia and North Kurdistan before the frontier was delimited, the bases of the Turkish–Irak flank were uprooted. Turkey cannot therefore, except under compulsion, recognise any decision which recognises this advance as possession. She could more easily renounce Mosul than she could corn-growing Kurdistan from which the two Zabs and the Diala flow into the Tigris ; but she must also fight for this Arab town, since she cannot leave Mosul in the hands of the British and the Anglo-Arab state of Irak or see it made the capital of one of two dependent emirates without delivering its main artery—the line Adana–Aleppo–Nisibin–Mosul—to the ups and downs of the Anglo-French action and counter-action. The triangle Nisibin–Dzesireh ibn-Omar–Mosul is, therefore, to-day one of the most dangerous points in the Versailles system.

It is not to be understood from this that behind this

resistance Turkey conceals designs on Mesopotamia. Turkey at Mosul fights for things which are of great strategical, national and economic importance and which are to be found in a definitely limited area. She can no longer dream of extending her old claims to Mesopotamia after her rise as a national state and her abolition of the caliphate. From that reason she entertains only limited ambitions on the western flank of her endangerised southern front. She does not covet Syria, but thinks only of the recovery of the triangle Alexandretta–Antioch–Aleppo which the Byzantines defended to the last as the bulwark of the north.

To her last breath Turkey defended Syria in the World War. Kemal first took to the hills when the wrecks of the Irak army despaired of cutting their way through to him from Bagdad *via* Nisibin and Aleppo. Consequently, the struggle for the Tigris flank is seen to be intimately connected with that for the Amanus flank. The two form a strategic unity and aim at the security of the Mosul–Aleppo line. As Turkey was not strong enough to offer battle along the whole line she retired in the west to the Amanus range and left North Syria to the French without abandoning her rights on the glacis of Aleppo and the coastal region of Antioch and Alexandretta. She gave that thought expression at Lausanne when she made the French promise to give North Syria autonomy and to assure the Turkish language equality with Arabic in the Sanjak of Aleppo. When France did not fulfil her pledge and trouble arose in Antioch, the Turks reminded France of her promise, but France who, in agreement with Britain, had taken over the Syrian mandate, although the Syrian inhabitants of all races and religions protested and demanded freedom, took her time. Then there flared up the Druse rebellion, which spread with fierce rapidity over the whole country. The mandatory of the League whom the Syro-Palestinian congress had denounced in a protest to the League as the destroyer of Syria, saw herself suddenly threatened on all sides. She had founded her rule on force instead of trying to solve the manifold problems of this land with its old civilisation and in 1925 reaped the bloody harvest of her policy. When, defeated in the Lebanon, the French retired on Damascus, the Damascus–Aleppo railway and the coast and for two days indulged in a

panic bombardment of Damascus in order to quell the rising, the whole Islamic world from Delhi to Tangier was in an uproar. France, who had felt it necessary to retreat on the Rhine because her strength was beginning to be exhausted, faced an abyss. She saw her prestige as an Islamic Power lowered and her legendary fame as champion of civilisation and liberator of oppressed peoples in grave danger. Perhaps this tragic incident of Damascus will one day be treated by history as the first visible sign of the downfall of the system of hegemony established at Versailles. To-day, like the conflict over Mosul, it indicates a crisis in the mandate system.

Turkey still maintains a reserved attitude with regard to Syria. She stands ready at its northern gates and gathers her strength in the Kurdish valleys. As long as the French stand ready to march from Aleppo to Dzesireh and permit the Turks the use of the Bagdad railway, they hold a trump card in the game for Mosul. But Turkey must be ready to be summoned to negotiate on Aleppo if ever France withdraws from the interior and the desert frontiers to the coast. Possibly Britain will then appear on the Syrian stage and on the north frontier of Mesopotamia in order to create a great Arab kingdom and prepare the way for a caliph of Arab race. Britain has toyed with the idea for long. She has reason to do so, for, in the heart of the East, she stands on the Turkish southern front far more strongly armed than France and Turkey. Her power stretches from the Shatt-el-Arab to the Nile ; her hand, filled with subsidies, is stretched over Mecca, Medina and Transjordania ; she holds Cyprus before the maritime gates of Syria, a flank position which commands the whole Syrian coast. Perhaps France, because of that, will decide to remain in Syria and fight for it so long as she has strength.

To-day Turkey no longer sends armies over the Danube to support France in the struggle for the Rhine and the domination of the Continent, but she has again become a Power in Asia. Neither at Versailles nor Lausanne was the Eastern Question solved. It is rather posed in a new form by the retreat of the Ottomans to Angora, through Russia's great change of policy, through the invasion of the holy lands of the East by western imperialism and through the awakening of the Islamic world. In this complex situation Turkey has

appeared as a new and important Power. She has severed herself from the Levant, made 8,000,000 Turks and Kurdo-Medians into a nation and carries on in Anatolia a new struggle. The struggle is internal and external and in it she seeks to overcome the past for the sake of the future. But she is still in the process of regeneration, has not yet settled her internal affairs and has not fully obtained her national frontiers. It would, therefore, be rash to prophesy about her future.

When the new Turkey secured Constantinople as a bridgehead but placed the capital at Angora, abolished sultanate and caliphate and made with Russia treaties which make the two Powers allies on the Asian front, she freed herself from the fetters which the maritime Powers had placed upon her on the Bosporus. Lloyd George had not foreseen this development when in the House of Commons he defended the restoration of Constantinople to the Turks with the proud words: "So long as the Turks hold Constantinople they will make it their capital and so their capital will always tremble before the thunder of our Dreadnoughts."

Two years later at the tribunal of the League of Nations, Turkey, of which he had spoken so contemptuously, struggled face to face with Britain for Mosul and Kurdistan and the British Dreadnoughts lay idle opposite the abandoned palaces of Stambul. No one can say whether or not the Turk, relying on Persian and Russian support, or relying only on himself, will fight for Mosul in arms, but he will certainly not change a claim into a renunciation nor surrender his interest in Balkan politics. The Oriental riddle makes but a mock of prophecy.

CHAPTER XVII

RUSSIA: NATIONAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AIMS

Russia lies outside the area with which the Versailles dictators were concerned and has retired from western Europe, but her position as the chief Power in Asia is unchanged. When, during the World War, she withdrew behind the Narva and to the Dnieper and Petrograd surrendered the sceptre to Moscow, the Russian centre of gravity was transferred to the east. Moscow is not the centre but lies on the west flank of the Russian territory. It is an offensive position against the west. The new centre is astride the Urals.

Russia fell in the war, as the chief Slav Power, before she reached the sacred goal of Constantinople. The way to Byzantium has been sought by all the nations which lived on the steppe and rivers of the east and on the coast of the Baltic. The desire for the warm southern sea and Mediterranean culture always worked powerfully on the northern peoples. The Russians were the last to press south but the first to seek to gain their end as a settled people. They were not set in motion of their own volition but under the rule of the Varangians. As eastern Slavs they wandered insecurely between the Urals and the Carpathians when North German settlers came seeking a river route to the Black Sea. From them Russia received the impulse to build a state and owes to them her name and her ambition. In the IXth century the warlike merchants who had come from the coasts of Sweden in order to barter iron for gold and furs ruled a Slavic people on the Neva and Lake Ladoga. The name Rurik emerges from Russian prehistory.

The duchy of Rurik was the first stage on the road to Byzantium. When Rurik's son, Oleg, went down the Dnieper and conquered Kiev, the second stage was accomplished. Kiev became the southern centre of a state expanding southwards. Soon afterwards, Oleg's warriors reached the Black Sea and were knocking at the gates of Byzantium. The Normans had surrounded the European Continent; the Baltic, the North

Sea, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea roared under their galleys.

The advance southward which the Varangians gave to Russia as her mission received geographical expression at the end of the IXth century in the line Novgorod–Kiev–Byzantium and has not been ended because of Russia's defeat in the Great War. In the course of the last millennium Russia has suffered many defeats and for centuries was pressed back into the north-east by Poles, Swedes and Tartars, but she has always kept Oleg in remembrance. The Varangian road is not thought of as a frontier line, but as a connecting line, and in Russian history it became a line of movement on which the centre of gravity of the Russian state in the course of a thousand years has been changed thrice.

Sviatoslav, the first Viking to bear a Russian name and the last pagan on the throne of Kiev, still wandered in adventurous raids into the heart of the Continent. His campaigns had no realisable aims. The desire for territory which the boundless forest- and steppe-land awakes in the Russian, is seen in his deeds. Sviatoslav rode from the Dnieper to the Volga, defeated Khazars, Kama-Bulgars and Tcherkesses; rode from the Dnieper to the Pruth, appeared as ally of Byzantium on the Danube, conquered the Danube-Bulgars, drove back from Kiev the Petchenegs swarming out of the Crimea, defeated the Bulgarian Tsar Boris II, crossed the Balkans and planted his war tents before Adrianople. He was the first Russian Tsar who desired to march on Constantinople and extend his power over the Balkan peninsula. When he was compelled to retire before Byzantines and Bulgars and was slain by Petcheneg arrows on the Danube, the development of the next thousand years had been anticipated by one heroic adventurer.

Sviatoslav's youngest son, Vladimir, withdrew before the pressure of his enemies. He concentrated his strength at Kiev and united the tiny duchies of the Varangians into a great Slav kingdom. When in 988 he took Cherson and embraced Greek Christianity in order to wed Anna, the sister of Basil II, Russia entered the eastern Christian world. The Varangian way became a road for Byzantine missionaries and Russia the chief pillar of the Greek Church. Vladimir, however, destroyed the Russian power by dividing the unitary

kingdom before his death between his eight sons. The family conflict of the sons of Rurik dominated Russian history and led to the creation of separate states. The supremacy of Kiev vanished until Vladimir Monomachos brought the small states again under its suzerainty. But his achievement was not lasting, and when he died in 1125 the glory of the " mother of the Russian cities " began to pale. In the middle of the XIIth century the centre of gravity of Russia began to move to the Volga basin.

At the beginning of the XIIIth century we come to the great turning point in Russian history. The Mongol invasion broke the Russian state in pieces. When Batu Khan in 1239 led the whole military strength of the Golden Horde to a decisive campaign against the West in order to fulfil Gengis Khan's last instructions and complete the conquest of the world, South Russia was shattered to pieces. On December 6, 1240, he stormed the citadel of Kiev and razed the city to the ground. The gates of Europe were opened. Batu overran Volhynia, Cujavia, Silesia, Moravia, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria and Moldavia, but his conquest was permanent only in Russia. The Golden Horde established itself on the Volga and made the Kipchak kingdom the chief Power in the European east.

Russia fell into two sections. The land between the Dnieper and the Don became a frontier land—a " Ukraine "—, and lay desolate ; Podolia, Volhynia and Galicia were cut from the north and became Russia Minor, while the people who had fled north reached the sources of the Volga and helped to make North Russia Russia Major. The Little Russians yielded to the Great Russians. The political centre of gravity after the fall of Kiev was shifted to Novgorod and Moscow now became a defensive flank position. The Great Russians who lived mingled with the Finns in forest lands could more easily than the Little Russians escape the Tartars who lived on the steppe and the Black Sea coast.

In the south-west, the principality of Halicz rose to greatness by Daniel's conquest of Galicia and Volhynia, but it was soon overshadowed by Lithuania and Poland. A powerful state was created in the north by the union of the Republic of Novgorod with the Grand Duchy of Vladimir. Novgorod,

the commercial city which had risen out of Rurik's original seat of power, and in the XIIIth century had extended its influence from Lake Ilmen and the Neva to the White Sea and across the Urals to the Obi, found a leader in Alexander Nevsky who defeated the Swedes and the German knights and assured the frontiers of Russia at Lake Peipus and on the Neva against aggression from west and north. He is the first national hero of Russia. He remained subject to the Great Khan and even when he inherited the Vladimir duchy never thought of a national rising, but through his victories he preserved intact at a critical hour Russia's national self-consciousness.

The rise of North Russia and the foundation of Muscovite supremacy is connected with the conquest by the Tartars. When the Great Khan granted to Alexander's grandson, Ivan I, Grand Duke of Moscow, the right to collect the tribute of Russia on behalf of the Golden Horde, he laid the foundation stone of Moscow's supremacy. The Russian Church did not fail to rise to the occasion. It transferred to Moscow its headquarters, which had remained until 1299 in rebuilt Kiev, and then been taken to Vladimir on the Kliasma.

In 1376 came the first rising against the oppressors. Dmitri IV marched on Kazan and compelled it to pay tribute. Four years later, the Russian army won its first pitched battle at Kulikovo on the Don. In 1382 the Tartars burned Moscow and re-established their rule, but the victory of Kulikovo restored the Russians' faith in their destiny. In the buffer states of Alexander and Dmitri the Muscovite world first came into conflict with the states of the Continent and the building of a Russian state really began. With that the Russians realised not merely their political need of an ice-free coast but the driving power of their religious faith. Since the middle of the XVth century they had been the champions of the true religion and protector of the Greek Church. The eyes of all the believers turned after the fall of Constantinople to Moscow. The Byzantine conception of religious world dominion fused with Russian national feeling. Tsarism was the powerful expression of a universal idea, an idea which developed freely among the imaginative eastern Slavs. It still retains its

power and to-day appears in the Tartarised Russia of Communism as world-revolution.

Moscow became important as the strategic flank position of North Russia in the conflict with the Tartars and the Poles. When the Ottoman appeared, the Muscovite kingdom was unassailably surrounded by the provinces it had conquered. Ivan Kalita tripled the area surrounding the grand duchy. Ivan III conquered the north glacis and created a unified state of Russia. He reduced Novgorod, re-captured Dnieper-Russia, destroyed the Khanate of Kazan and completely freed himself from the Golden Horde, which disappeared before the Russians and the Tartars of the Crimea. When Ivan III died in 1505 the Kipchak kingdom was worsted; the grand duchy passed to the offensive.

Ivan the Terrible, the type of mediæval Muscovite despot, took Astrakhan, invaded Livonia and was only driven back by the united effort of Poland and Sweden. He turned to the east and sent Russia's lost children, the Cossacks, who lived the life of free outlaws in the wild countryside between Russians and Tartars, to conquer the Far East. Yermak, in 1581, crossed the Urals and laid the foundations of Russian rule in Siberia. When Ivan died Muscovy had become Russia.

The strategic position of the Russian kingdom which, after Ivan's death, was weakened by internal disputes is determined by the triple aspect of its expansionist policy. Old Russia had been formed into a strong state and the era of conquest began. The doors of the West were opened to it whenever the strength of Poland, Russia's greatest enemy after the Tartars, was exhausted.

Boris Godunov slew the last Tsarevitch of Ivan's race, repelled the Crimean Tartars once again from the Moskwa glacis, gave the Russian Church freedom from Byzantium, riveted the peasant to the soil, opened Russia to the Hansa, and died when the Poles advanced on Moscow to enthrone the false Dmitri. The first national war in Russia drove the Poles out of the capital. The Romanovs ascended the throne and the mission of Great Russia came to fulfilment. "It stood armed on two fronts, fought in the west for national unity and in the south-east for Christian civilisation. Fate placed it at Europe's eastern gate. It held off for centuries the Asiatic

invasions while central and western Europe organised itself as national states, held Islam at bay, and across the ocean discovered a new world in the West. Russia fought as a flank guard to Europe and Europe felt that danger no longer threatened from the Altaic east. But it scarcely noticed that the Russian had been thrown back from the Dnieper to the Kliasma, from the Kliasma to the Moskwa, until he was strong enough to take the offensive and again define his European position at the end of the XVIth century." (Kluchevski.)

The advance from the Moscow flank position to the European front was slow and difficult. The first Romanov had to defend the kingdom against Poles and Swedes. The second advanced the western frontier to Smolensk, the third subdued the Don and Dniester Cossacks, the fourth made Russia a great European Power and gave a new form to old Russia's aim. We are at the Russia of Peter the Great.

When Peter, in the Northern War, won an outlet on the Baltic, Russia did not appear as an intruder among the European Powers. The weight of Russia did not fall on a equipoised balance for Sweden, Poland and Turkey had all lost weight. To the system of equilibrium created by Britain with the help of Austria and the Germanic north, in spite of imperialist France, the Russian did not appear a menace. Europe had to reckon with Russia only when Peter's successors, carrying out an imaginary testament, advanced on Riga, Baku and the Pacific. The significance of Peter's conception is not its triple maritime objective, which is already indicated at the dawn of Russian history, nor in the advance on Transcaspia, Persia, the Armenian glacis and to the encirclement of the Ottoman empire, but in the deliberate expansion which gives the conception greatness. He had fought on the Narva, the Ukraine steppe, the Pruth, the Caspian and the southern glacis of the Caucasus ; he had had dealings with Sweden, Turkey, Persia, Poland, Denmark, the maritime Powers, Austria and France, but he had not exhausted Russia's strength. He worked far from his base without losing himself in space.

When Peter died the western frontier was still that of the Varangian way. In the north it had been advanced from Lake Peipus to Riga and followed the line Smolensk–Kiev, but

in the south it still ran by Jekaterinoslav to the Sea of Azov, and was not moved till the death of the Tsarina Elizabeth. Already Russia had won influence in the Bessarabian steppe and in the Balkans as far as Bosnia, even when driven in defeat from the Pruth to the Dniester, and in the War of the Polish Succession marched as Austria's ally to the Rhine. Russia was a power in Poland before setting foot in the land. Only when the armies of Catherine II advanced against Bar and Warsaw did Russia think of advancing her frontier to the western side of the Slav area in order to support the advance on Constantinople by creating a strong flank position in the Vistula basin, to hold Europe in check from the Vistula flank and extend her dominion over the whole east. When Catherine II turned to the south the dome of St. Sofia beckoned from out of the darkness of past history.

The first attack on the Turks broke down on the Pruth; the second won the Sea of Azov, robbed the Sultan of the Crimean Tartars and the Kuban Cossacks and opened Turkish waters to Russia; the third secured Otchakov and compelled the Turks to recognise the Dniester as frontier; the fourth advanced the frontier to the Pruth; the fifth conquered the Black Sea coast and opened the Bosporus and the Dardanelles to the Russian fleet; the sixth—an unfortunate one—died out within the walls of Sebastopol. The Western Powers invited Russia to Paris and made her bow for the first time to a European law. They shut the Dardanelles to her and imprisoned her Black Sea fleet.

It was a serious defeat for Russia's Balkan policy. Her southern expansion had become an affair of Europe and a part of the eastern question. The seventh campaign, six years after the founding of the German Empire, was more successful. Russia appeared on the Danube as champion of the Christian peoples, crossed the Balkans, pressed with her Roumanian ally to Adrianople and demanded the creation of a Great Bulgaria which should possess the Aegæan coast from Dedeagatch to Salonika. Austria and Britain united against the Russian menace. Austria demanded, remembering the days of Eugène, a free prospect in the east. After her retreat from the Rhine and her loss of the Po and the Adige, her future could only be in the east, and freed from German cares, she

took up a position as an Eastern Power. Britain was still more uneasy at the new situation in the east. She saw the Bosporus in the hands of imperialist Russia, the Cossacks threatening the road to India, and the whole Levant was menaced by a pan-Slav invasion. The peace of Europe had received a deadly blow. The danger zone of European policy seemed transferred to the east, but the explanation of its dangerousness is to be found on the Rhine and the Seine. A great European war seemed looming behind the Russo-Turkish War.

The Powers prepared for war, only France and Germany standing aloof. Under Bismark's guidance Germany regarded with indifference the Balkan question; France had not yet recovered sufficiently to pursue a European policy. The truth was both were fettered to their positions on the Rhine. Bismark, however, entered the diplomatic field.

The disputing Powers went to Berlin, where Bismark appeared as mediator and sought at the Berlin Congress to settle the eastern question in a way that would preserve peace without injuring Russian interests. Britain and Austria agreed to the solution, but Russia did not escape disappointment. By the treaty which the Congress produced Austria occupied Bosnia, Britain Cyprus, Roumania surrendered Bessarabia in exchange for the Dobrudja. Russia obtained only Kars and Batum and the creation of a smaller Bulgaria and had to withdraw from the Balkans. As a result, Russia saw not only part of the Petrine mission called in question, but Constantinople, her millennial objective, saved from her. The Russians left Berlin convinced that all Europe was against them on the Bosporus. Only France appeared ready to stand by them to win on the Neva an ally in the struggle for the Rhine. A new orientation of Powers was announced.

But Russia did not yet let herself be bound; she turned to the Pacific. The Asiatic lands called her; she moved her Amur flank southward, with the aid of the Siberian railway opened Manchuria and appeared on the Yellow Sea. There a stronger Power stood in the path. Japan called out her whole strength for a counter-stroke and, with the approval of Britain, drove the Russians from the coast and the Yalu to Mukden.

On two fronts Russia had been defeated. Revolution

shook the autocracy. The creation of Peter tottered because the objectives set by Peter had not been won. But a great lesson had been learned. Russia had been defeated before Constantinople and at Port Arthur because she had acted in isolation from Europe. Unsupported she had fought on the Bosporus, in Persia, on the Afghan frontier, on the Pamirs, and in the Far East, and threatened the flank of the British Empire. To reach an understanding with Britain and then to act as part of the European system without abandoning the aims laid down by Peter became the task of Russian policy. Now the alliance made ten years earlier with France began in Russian eyes to have aggressive significance; now Russia completely joined the outlying Powers in their struggle to deprive Central Europe of its share of the world's treasure and of control of the lands opposite Europe and to exclude her from its lands across the ocean. Russia let her eccentric objectives alone; she gathered her strength for a concentric advance on the continental western frontier.

The defensive flank which Russia had created in the XVIIIth century in the Vistula basin, covered by which she could march south and from which she was driven only by the war with Napoleon, now began to be organised as an offensive position. Germany, the ally of the Balkan Power Austria, and the friend of Turkey, was recognised as the enemy. Bismark had withdrawn from the eastern question; the policy of William II plunged Germany ever deeper into the Balkan-Levantine chaos. The constructor of the Siberian railway and the constructor of the Bagdad railway had no more to say to one another. When Austria annexed Bosnia, Russia's armies were ready on the Bug. But the strength of Germany frightened her and the Western Powers temporised. France's military preparation was not complete; Britain not yet tied to the wheels of French policy. Austria again appeared in the rôle of Eugène and compelled Turks and Serbs to yield. When Germany stood "in glittering armour" by Austria's side, Russia and the Western Powers gave way.

Russia then took a surprising course. She encouraged the Balkan states to form an alliance and eject the Turk from Macedonia. It was a dangerous game. Russia underestimated the strength of Balkan nationalism. Her influence

was no longer strong enough to guide as she wished Serbs, Bulgars, Greeks and Roumanians. When the Balkan War became a war between the Balkan allies, a war which was a challenge alike to Russia and the Concert of Europe, Russian policy was faced with catastrophe. It saw the great objective from which Russia had been repulsed so often because the Great Powers stood in her way, coveted by little states and her claims ignored. But the decision of Serbia, after her conquest of Monastir and Uskub, to turn away from Salonika and seek to win Bosnia and the Herzegovina renewed her hope. When the Archduke Franz Ferdinand fell victim to Great Serbian propaganda and Austria demanded compensation from Serbia, Russia's hour had come. This time she knew the help of France and Britain would not fail. The conflict of interests in the Balkans, in Persia and Mesopotamia, at the gates of the Adriatic, in the western Mediterranean, in the North Sea, and on the Rhine had become so fierce and the system of alliances and counter-alliances so complicated that the tiniest accident could prove fatal to peace.

When the Austro-Serb dispute became the Austro-Russian dispute, the whole mechanism of coalitions was set in motion. All was over for Europe. The announcement of the Russian general mobilisation was the signal for a universal war.

Russia was the first Power to fall, her national impetus and her dynamic force exhausted on the bloody fields of Poland and Galicia. It was the belief that she fought for sacred, purely Russian ends that brought her into the field, but she did not make a single strategic step in Europe towards their realisation. A Russian brigade lay in the trenches in Champagne; a Russian division fought at Salonika; a Russian corps crossed the Bessarabian steppe and entered the Dobrudja to fight with the Roumanian south army and with it was flung back from Topraisar on Babadagh and Galatz; a cavalry corps hurried through the Bukovina and Moldavia to cover the retreat of the beaten Roumanians from Craiova to the Alt. A Russian army under Sakharov hurried by forced marches from the Pruth to the Arges and was involved in the great defeat before Bucharest which drove the Roumanians from their capital to Rimnicu-Sarat and Focsani—but no Russian army marched on the Dniester to follow the path of old

victories, win the Bulgarian glacis and the Balkan passes and advance on Adrianople.

Only on the Caucasian front did the war appear a Turkish war; only here did the Russians recognise a historic conflict. In the first encounter they were driven back on Kars, then after heavy fighting conquered the Armenian uplands, the key to Asia Minor, captured Erzerum and pressed on with dwindling strength towards Angora to assail Constantinople from the Asiatic flank. But this war brought no strategic reward, for the main Russian army was being consumed in the struggle for East Prussia, the Moravian plain and the Carpathian passes. Russia paid for her alliance with the Western Powers in the destructive battles in Poland. The renunciation of Prussia's friendship, the transformation of the strategic defensive position into an aggressive one were bitterly avenged. Four times the Russian army was set in motion against the Prussian Vistula, the Moravian plain and the Carpathians; four times it reeled back defeated.

When the German divisions closed the gap the Russians had torn in the Austrian front and the Russian main army fell back to the Bug and the Dvina, Russia was thrown back centuries. In vain the Tsar in December 1916 again announced that the war would be waged till Constantinople was won. When those Allies who had, in complete reversal of former policies, promised him Constantinople, allowed him to be overthrown in order to have the revolution as ally, the Russian will to war flared up once again. In agreement with the Western Powers the Duma deposed the Tsar and not merely announced in March 1917 the liberation of the nation from autocracy, but also the prosecution of the war. It was but a brief effort. A few weeks later the bourgeoisie left the Government, and left power to the intelligentsia and the Socialists. Yet even in these national feeling was still alive. They called on the army for yet another attack in Podolia and the Dniester valley. From Tarnopol to Halicz the cannon thundered in Russia's last great battle in the World War. Caucasian and Siberian regiments, the Guard and the Czech legion were led by the revolutionary battalion of death against the enemy trenches. When the attack died out in the Dniester plain and on the heights before Brzezany, hopes of victory

died out also, for ambition no longer lured the army on. It remained in its lines and hoisted the Red flag. The German counter-attack flung the shattered armies on the frontiers of Bessarabia and when the attack spread to the north sector the last resistance collapsed. After the fall of Riga and the loss of the Baltic Islands the Bolsheviks, who had seized power, asked for peace. The Revolution had destroyed the national state; the world propagation of the Tartarised teaching of Marx began.

On December 22, 1917, the Russian representatives appeared to negotiate peace at Brest-Litovsk. Meantime, behind the Red front, the victorious proletarian minority raged against the shattered ruling class and secured the adherence of the peasants. The Bolshevik negotiators sought to obtain the most favourable terms without abandoning their fundamental hostility and used the negotiations to issue their Communist creed to the world. They declared that no forcible appropriation of territory which had been occupied during the war should take place; that the political independence of the nations defeated in the war must be restored; that national groups not independent before the war must be given the opportunity to choose freely whether they would create a free state of their own or what state they would join. In these declarations there is an echo of the Wilson doctrine, but in the mouth of Bolshevism it was a manifesto which called to the Communist standards all the unliberated, oppressed and landless of the world. The federal conception which had found expression centuries before in the Russian principalities and the semi-nomadic inclination which is so powerful in Russia, were mingled with the proletarian movement of the workers and the desire for land of the peasant to form a religious faith which knew no frontiers and shrank from no consequences. The proletarian principle became the strongest tactical weapon which ever was used in a life and death struggle. When Bolshevism succeeded in winning all the dispossessed of war-torn Europe for the erection of a proletarian dictatorship, Bolshevism became a Eurasian movement with Moscow as its capital. It was nothing else than a revival of the pan-Russian mission without its religious foundations. It meant the union of the world-proletariat under

Russian leadership, the establishment of Russian world empire on the bases of internationalism.

The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk were condemned to failure, since neither the German Powers, who as victors needed freedom of action in the east in order to strike in the west, nor the Muscovites who, delivered from the shackles of tradition, sought to turn the world upside down, could offer the other anything. The negotiations were broken off. The Central Powers resumed the war, occupied Narva, Kiev and Odessa, liberated Finland, and marched on Azov and Petrograd. The Russian rulers took the easiest way out of the difficulty. They signed the treaty, which drove Russia back beyond the Varangian way, without reading it, and fixed their hopes on the final issue of the war and the world revolution.

Muscovite Russia as a proletarian state gathered strength in the rear of the victorious Central Powers. A new despotism arose from the shattered Tsarist state. By the time that the World War had ended and the Versailles settlement been announced, proletarian Russia had organised itself east of the Dnieper. A year later the last White army which had advanced victoriously against Moscow from the old home of the Golden Horde was beaten on the glacis which Ivan IV had won, and driven back beyond the Urals. The Cossack steppe became part of the Soviet system and the Muscovite Empire recovered the coasts of the White and the Black Seas. Revolutionary Russia felt itself strong enough to attack Poland and the Ukraine. Badly armed, loosely organised armies swarmed over the Polish glacis. The effort which took them to the gates of Warsaw was too much ; they were driven back after heavy fighting across the Niemen and the Dnieper. In the south, too, the Russian effort failed. France landed a new emigré army in the Crimea and the Ukrainian army attacked the beaten Russians on the flank. Then the proletarian junta in Moscow showed its capacity for leadership. It made peace with the exhausted Poles and surrendered Russian territory to them ; then it concentrated all its forces in the south, defeated the Ukrainians, threw the Crimean army back to its ships and by December 31, 1920, was free of all its enemies. Russia re-appeared as the Union of Socialist

Sovietist Republics. It had lost the whole Polono–Lito–Slav area, but it still had a population of 100,000,000 in Europe, a population of 30,000,000 in Asia and an area of 20,000,000 square kilometres. Its military strength is not yet capable of action; its economic activity is restricted; but Bolshevism in the Sovietist system has created a state-form that rests on a very old, semi-Asiatic tradition which satisfies the primitive peoples of the East. The real federalism of Sovietism is sufficient to open the whole East to the Russians and the Communist ideal is able to terrify all the states of the West. Religious conceptions are at work in the movement, and consequently there is an increase in Russian strength which is universally felt, and which compels not merely the vanquished but also the victors of Versailles to adopt a new position. Russia is returning to her place as a recognised national state.

When Lenin, the intellectual leader of the movement, died in 1924, the stubborn Communist idealists had already entered on the way of state-capitalism and had even admitted the principle of the private ownership of land, but the Russian power has so increased that it can set out as its own the old geo-political aims of Russianism, and unite the world-aim of revolution with pan-Russian ambitions. Russia again enters the path laid down for her by geographical law.

As the carrying out of the testament of Peter does not depend upon retaining the state-form which Peter created nor on any particular social organisation, nothing prevents Russia resuming Peter's policy. Russia sees herself confined in Europe by the encirclement created at Versailles, but in Asia, on the contrary, she feels neither confined nor restricted. The area between the Urals and the Amur permits in the east greater freedom of movement than is permitted in the west and the Far East tempts her to swifter attack and greater success than a campaign against the endlessly increasing throng of states in Europe. Her thoughts turn not to Riga and Constantinople but to Pekin and Kabul.

The advance in Asia, however, does not imply any renunciation of her position in Europe. Russia's renunciation of Baltic and Mediterranean ambitions is only temporary. The change of front was determined by her expulsion from the Baltic coasts, the advance of Poland into the White and Little

Russian areas and the return of the Moldav-Roumanians to the Dniester. The Soviet rulers after the World War acted precisely as did Tsarist Russia after the Crimean War and after the Berlin Congress. But they equally remain convinced of the necessity of organising their European western flank as a base of attack as in that region more difficult problems confront them than confronted the old empire. The base of attack is, strategically considered, a defensive one, but politically it is an offensive one. The Russians will not tire of expressing vigorously their claims to the land taken from them, and of preparing the way for the accomplishment of their revolutionary mission. They thus keep Europe in constant anxiety without firing a shot. They quickly learned to use the Communist ideal as a menace and at the same time to divide the capitalist interests of Europe.

The objectives of Peter the Great's policy have not been attained, but to-day Russia's cramped position on the Baltic and on the Black Sea influences her attitude to Europe less than the wedge Poland has driven into her continental flank. It is not so much, perhaps, the actual geographical fact that weighs upon her, as the intentions of the Versailles Powers when they created the new Poland. When Poland was placed to separate Russia and Germany and thus stands ready for war on two fronts Russia saw herself cut off from a land with which she has intimate connection and which protected her rear so long as her ambitions did not aim at German territory. The relations between Prussia and Russia since the death of the Tsarina Elizabeth were vital for the development of both countries. Catherine's whole eastern policy was based upon them. Only when Napoleon shattered the old European state system, did Russia allow herself to be momentarily divorced from Prussia and at Tilsit abandoned the ally by whose side she had fought at Eylau and Friedland. The wars which Russia waged with revolutionary and Napoleonic France were intimately related to the general history of Europe; they first became a truly Russian experience when Napoleon invaded Russia. Then Europe under Napoleon's leadership fought to make recalcitrant Russia yield to the French Empire, fought under compulsion but in submission to the French ideal of continental hegemony. It is worth while recalling

the 1812 campaign and relating it to present events, but it ought not to be compared to a League of Nations war threatening Russia with ruin, since that implies a political grouping of European Powers against Russia of which there is at present no proof. Neither Britain nor France are to-day strong enough to lead the Continent to war against Russia and Germany will have to refuse aid to such an enterprise whenever her membership of the League of Nations causes her to assume the obligations laid down by Article 16.

Russia, however, appreciates the historical fact that the strategic defence of her western frontiers is intimately bound up with the maintenance of relations with Germany. The arrival of Poland in former German and Russian territory has not made any change in the situation. Russia met with disaster when she changed a strategic defensive flank-position into an offensive base and with all her strength sought to advance from it in order to reach Constantinople by the round-about road of the Brandenburger Tor. She can successfully defend its new frontier on the Dnieper only if Germany refuses to be the ally of the Western Powers and refuses them passage through her territory. The empire in the centre of Asia and the empire in the centre of Europe cannot do without each other, whatever the future may bring. They bought this knowledge in the World War at the cost of a descent into an abyss from which they are now slowly emerging. The recovery of central Germany is much more difficult than that of outlying Russia, which has not only overthrown all the idols and shattered all the conventions but has also gathered to her standard the dispossessed of all the world and with the slogan, "War on European Capitalism," has roused the whole East from the Black to the Yellow Seas.

When Turkey adopted that slogan and its echo was heard in China, from which came the voice of a desire for national independence, the Asiatic world opened its gates to realisation of the aims of revolutionary Russia. The new advance of Russia in Asia is based on the agreements signed with the two outlying Asiatic Powers, Turkey and Japan. These agreements appear as Asiatic agreements between Asiatic Powers and are witness to the transformation of political relations in Asia. Russia has thereby probably promised renunciations in

the extreme corners of Asia in which Japan and Turkey stand ready for war, but she has at the same time greatly strengthened her position in the main Asiatic area between the Caspian Sea and the Amur, and has drawn to herself Turkestan and Mongolia. The war for Constantinople is postponed; the war for Korea is abandoned. The great maritime objectives are now in the background and the foreground is occupied by a continental policy of revolution.

Russia was not invited to the Paris Conference where Japan, China, Britain and America fought a great diplomatic battle for the settlement of Eastern Asia, but she was strongly planted in Siberia. She drove across the Urals the emigré armies equipped by Britain and France, drove the Czechs from the enemy's camp, called to China to free the Chinese from the capitalist yoke of European imperialism, appeared victoriously at Lake Baikal and gathered thousands of Tunghuses and Chinese to her standards. American troops fought by the side of the Japanese, until Japan occupied in their rear North Sakhalin and the coasts of the Gulf of Okhotsk. Then the Americans withdrew. The quarrel between Japan and the United States helped the Russians to victory. They destroyed the last emigré force, founded the Communist "Republic of the Far East" and at the psychological moment offered Japan peace. When Japan refused to recognise the Bolshevik Government, the Russians came to an understanding with China and, when Japan left the Washington Conference in ill-humour, saw in her a future ally.

On January 21, 1925, Russia and Japan concluded a fundamental treaty in which Japan returned to the Treaty of Portsmouth which was recognised by the Bolsheviks. Not only was a historic understanding reached, but a political connection was formed which is directed against the Anglo-Saxon Powers, and seeks to have China as third partner, although both Russia and Japan occupy Chinese territory.

We stand here before a chaos of conflicts and intrigues. The men who hold power in distracted China are but pawns in the Russo-Japanese game, British, French and American influences are covertly at work amongst them and the formal negotiations of the League of Nations for the assuring of world peace and the Anglo-French negotiations on French

security are brought into confusion by what is happening in this area. No Great Power is disinterested; each is engaged in negotiation; China has ceased to be simply an object of imperialist policy.

Russia has abandoned all the concessions and privileges which Tsarism extorted from China and has surrendered Mongolia which Trotsky's Red guards occupied after the capture of Chita. But she has no intention of resigning her influence in China and lets the anti-capitalist idea and the federalist tendency do their work. They have gained for her countless adherents in this nation in revolt and have opened to her influence Persia and Afghanistan.

Russian policy has gone back to the great strategic concentration in Central Asia initiated by Nicolas I after the Crimean War and completed by Alexander III when, after the ill-humour left behind by the Berlin Congress had vanished Bismark let the Russians know that he would not go to war either for Bulgaria or Turkey. Bismark then opened to Russia the way to the East while he made Germany a strongly armed peaceful Power in the heart of Europe and turned the Eurasian Power eastwards in order to save Central Europe from disturbance. Britain and Russia fell foul of each other in Asia.

When the World War was over and Communist Russia, half by compulsion, half by design, turned to Asia again, England was deeply involved in Central Asia. The Russians came this time not as conquerors but in the guise of liberators. They compelled the British to leave Batum and Baku and won the Turkomans and the Kirghiz for the Soviet ideal. To-day Russia stands ready for war on the line which she occupied in 1907.

The Russian line extends from the Caspian Sea to the Amur, a line of enormous length. In the western sector Russia, supported by Turkomans and Kirghiz, is firmly fixed in the desolated lands over which Genghis Khan once passed in order to tread the kingdom of Khorasmia into dust and to follow the old military and trade routes into the cradle lands of the Arabs. Merv, Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent and Balkh have been won for the Soviet Union and the northern districts of the key land of Afghanistan have been

opened to Russian influence. Once again the Russians press against the north glacis of India and the western entrance of the Tarim valley. Bolshevik propaganda is active in Tibet and India, passes over the mountains and the Shungarei steppe and enters China by her most westerly province of Sin-Kian. In the middle sector, Russian strength is concentrated between the Irtish and Lake Baikal. The Mongolian plateau, the pasture land of Genghis Khan, from which the great conqueror emerged to create between the Yellow and the Black Seas the greatest military despotism which the world has seen, is entirely surrendered to Russian influence. No longer does the Mongol raid into distant lands. His national strength is exhausted and his impulse to conquest has waned, but he still holds the great line of communication which runs from Lake Baikal *via* Urga and the Gobi desert to Kalgan, Pekin and Tientsin. The remnants of the Mongols, despite the treaty which gave back Outer Mongolia to the Middle Kingdom, no longer look to Pekin but to Irkutsk and Chita—the key positions of the Russian front.

If we seek to express this offensive position politically, it is divided into two fronts, one directed towards the revolutionising of the Moslem nations of the Middle East and the other towards the revolutionising of the Buddhist nations of central and eastern Asia. Russia will perhaps not reap the full harvest of which it sows the seeds in Persia, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Tibet and Mongolia, since much depends on a national awakening of the peoples of the East, but she is the only Power which can use them to further her political ends in Asia, and to set in motion the whole East, which contains one-third of mankind. That will perhaps never happen, but we must not ignore the possibility since it indicates the significance and importance of the conflict in Eurasia.

The result of the Versailles settlement has been that the pressure on Russia in Europe has caused her in turn to press dangerously in Asia on the overseas domains of those Powers who pressed her back in Europe. As yet Russia's strength is still crippled, as yet the explosive force of Bolshevism is not having its full effect in Asia, but imperialism, which survived the crisis of the World War, none the less faces the last great trial of strength in the Far East.

When the European Powers met in Locarno to conclude a security pact, which released Britain from the most galling of the fetters that bound her to Europe, a new forward move was undoubtedly prepared for in the Asiatic Continent. Russia regards the pact with misgiving. She thinks that it endangers her revolutionary and her national policy and seeks to protect herself against its consequences. No one can say how she will escape the dilemma that confronts her, for as a revolutionary state she is bound by no tradition and at the same time she is in a position to use any tradition as a weapon. She alone conceives of the continental mass of Europe and Asia as an indivisible whole and on both fronts pursues a Eurasian policy. Varangian, Muscovite, Petrine and Leninist Russia are equally revelations of one and the same geographical and historical personality.

CHAPTER XVIII

BRITAIN'S STRUGGLE FOR THE EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWER AND THE RISE OF ANGLO-SAXONDOM TO WORLD DOMINION

We have still to deal with the Power which, at once outside and yet connected with the European area, founded its supremacy in Europe in the distant parts of the world by the most individual methods in history and now appears as the greatest and most individual World Power of all time—Britain. Britain, whose shadow falls on the history of every other state—arranging the Continent, connecting up the four quarters of the globe, raising up Powers and destroying nations, making or dissolving alliances, or obstinately making history in proud isolation—Britain, who to-day is at the height of her incomparable power, but perhaps already sees the shades of evening gathering, seeks once again, after the signing of the security pact, to run the world to her own taste and in spirit at least has turned her back on the mirage of Versailles, although the pact seems to guarantee the perpetuation of the Versailles settlement.

The history of Britain is dominated by two policies and falls into two great periods. The first concerns the policy which Britain followed on the Continent before she was fully conscious of her insular position and of her overseas mission. Only when in the XVIth century the English abandoned the attempt to conquer the continental coast opposite their island and renounced territorial acquisition in Europe in order to trust their destinies to the ocean, was the political character of the nation fixed and the foundations of world dominion laid. All their previous history fades into insignificance before the development of their sea power in the middle of the XVIth century.

When in the age of Elizabeth England, under the guidance of William Cecil, waged her great war at once for English Protestantism and a position in the world, she was still confined to Britain from the Firth of Forth southwards. Now

she broke from her island confinement, and with imperious step entered world history. The course of development is indicated by three great events. Drake's circumnavigation of the globe and his filibustering raids to the West Indies opened distant worlds to the English; the challenge of the Spanish world power called her to naval war; the destruction of the Spanish armada set her might free. Not the state, but filibusters and merchants sought gold and silver, silk and spices in the new worlds. Gain was the inspiration of her trade and the settlements established overseas were trading posts, but actually the state stood behind them and protected them. When on December 31, 1600, Elizabeth gave their patent to the "Governors and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies," which assured them for fifteen years a trading monopoly between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan, England entered on a path which was to lead her round the world. Spanish sea power was broken; the dying Portuguese power received its death blow in Indian waters; England set foot on the western coast of India. The colonial possessions of the English which were won on unclaimed coasts or existed on sufferance on the territory of foreign states, and were defended and enlarged by daring adventurers in small wars, continued to be casually acquired until the Puritan revolution and Cromwell made English colonial policy imperialist. Cromwell, by the Navigation Act, assured the English flag an advantage over all its rivals and connected the overseas settlements with the mother country. When England gathered herself together to enforce the Act and break the resistance of the Dutch, who saw their carrying trade in mortal danger, English statesmanship served an imperialist policy of interests which, since then, has been dominant in all Britain's dealings with other nations. The English fought three serious naval wars before they broke Dutch sea power. Her rival for supremacy at sea in 1674 preferred to follow in England's wake in order to keep its position as the second sea Power and to win English help in the fight for its continental position with imperialist France. Holland placed herself under English protection and England was thus compelled to fight against France, the latest conqueror of hegemony on the Continent.

England embarked now on a struggle to secure the coasts opposite which appeared to be threatened by France and so began the great conflict for the European balance of power as determined by herself. Relations with France were the dominant factor in English policy. England's battles from now on were fought by continental coalitions and German mercenaries, while she herself secured supremacy at sea, fostered her trade and built up an overseas colonial empire.

The great war with France began in 1689—a critical year in European history. The Palatinate went up in flames and at Louvois's order all the Rhineland from Durlach to Andernach was burned to ashes when, under William III, England first appeared in the field. The struggle for European equilibrium—Britain's historic task on the Continent—began to take shape; the war for liberty and against despotism—her legendary world mission—began to weave a halo round Britain's policy of interests. The Germans, however, saw rightly a reinforcement in their war for the Rhine when England entered the coalition which halted France in Flanders, for the Rhine was the stake in the war. The river must not fall into French possession, for that would assure French hegemony on the Continent. Germany needed the Rhine in order to live; France used it to dominate; England saw in the balancing of French and German interests on the Rhine the security of her own world-position.

The first war was fought on both sides of the Channel, since William III had to face at once France and the Stuart pretender. Louis XIV pressed him hard on the Continent, James II fought in Scotland and Ireland. But the strong character of William, although his occupancy of the British throne was almost like usurpation, easily overcame the weakness of James Stuart, although a French fleet had landed him in Ireland and the Irish had risen to support him. Once again old race hatreds flared up; the Celtic clans fought against the Teutonic conquerors. With targe and sword they fought with wild courage at the Battle of the Boyne till their last chieftain fell. William was victorious. Thousands of Irish and Scots fled with the last Stuart to France and with merciless force the hand of the victor fell upon Catholic Ireland. The naval victory which Tourville won off Beachy Head over

Torrington could not alter the situation in James's favour, but it was more than time for William to have his hands free, for the French were winning victories in the Netherlands, Spain and Savoy. No success came to William. He was beaten at Steinkirk, but the victory which the English fleet won on May 29, 1692, off La Hogue made England master of the northern waters. Two years later the English fleet appeared in the Mediterranean and drove Louis's ships from the high seas into Toulon harbour. The flag of France in these days yielded for ever to the British. When, in 1695, Louis sought peace, England abandoned her allies for the first time in order to secure her gains and her statesmen based their policy on insular conceptions.

William III entered into peace negotiations because the war had become of no importance to British interests. The offensive strength of France had been broken, the French fleet had been destroyed and all fear of a Stuart restoration had been removed. The Peace of Ryswick was the first peace concluded at the expense of the Holy Roman Empire. Louis recognised William as King of England and promised to abandon his support of the Pretender and the Irish. In this concession is enshrined Louis's greatest and France's permanent renunciation. England was from now on preserved from dynastic conflicts. Holland followed in the British wake in order to obtain a favourable commercial treaty. William III included in the peace terms a clause which gave the Dutch the right to occupy seven Belgian fortresses as a frontier barrier against France and thus created an inland fortification in favour of England on the Continent which was defended for a century, and in 1815 was again erected by Wellington at the expense of Holland. In 1695 England fully secured her own interests, which were well served by a temporary solution, but she abandoned her allies, Spain and the Empire, and so has to take the blame for the permanent loss of Alsace.

When Louis XIV began the War of the Spanish Succession, England realised that she had abandoned the struggle too soon, and renewed her alliance with the continental Powers. But she delayed till the last moment, and only when Louis had forced the surrender of the barrier fortresses did she turn aside from the profits of her trade to enter the war " for the sake of

Holland." At that time there was made in the English Parliament a fundamental political declaration in which the connection between the struggle for the maintenance of the European balance of power and the struggle for liberty and the security of the Flemish–Belgian glacis was brilliantly formulated. Parliament presented an address to the throne in which it declared itself ready to support the royal policy of an alliance with the Empire for the maintenance of the liberties of Europe, the welfare and the peace of England and with the intent of limiting the encroaching power of France. This war, too, ended at the pleasure of the British. In alliance with the Imperialists they fought at Höchstädt and Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet, but they also captured Gibraltar and were not disposed to fight any longer than " British interests " required. Britain left the coalition, having secured supremacy in the Channel and the Straits of Gibraltar, the possession of Minorca, great commercial privileges from Spain and France, and the dismantling of the fortifications of Dunkirk. The balance of power once secured, she left an alliance which had no more to offer her.

For the first time she began to turn away from Europe, but this time, too, she underestimated her opponent. In 1733 France again took the field to win back her lost hegemony in the Wars of the Polish and the Austrian Succession. Again Britain delayed, again she devoted herself to her maritime commerce, while battle after battle was fought on the Continent, and slipped into the conflict in the guise of Hanover which had given her a new dynasty. With German mercenaries she fought a minor war without much heart, until she saw her sea power threatened in the Mediterranean. Then again she girt herself for a national struggle and the expansion of her overseas domain.

From now on the relations between France and Britain were hostile. Britain fought for the world ; France fought for the Rhine. But invariably Britain left the theatre of war when she thought her war aims had been realised, without having definitely conquered France. She followed the merchant's instinct which taught her never to destroy a rival with whom after the war it was possible again to do business, and under varying conditions remained true to this policy until the war

of annihilation with Germany in 1914. Then she made peace too late, although in her earlier history she had always hitherto succeeded in catching the psychological moment.

When in 1748 she ended the War of the Austrian Succession and for the third time made peace on a maritime basis, actually little had been accomplished. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was only a deceptive armistice. France, in spite of her ruined finances, was not broken. She remained victorious on the Rhine and in the Netherlands and her colonial empire from an external point of view completely overshadowed Britain's overseas possessions. The domain which Dupleix had won in India was nearly twice the size of France and her North American domain stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay and hemmed in the narrow Atlantic zone of the British colonies along practically its whole length. France, besides, had not renounced her claim to supremacy at sea. But as far as the Continent was concerned, elementary instinct made her seek to possess the political area enclosed by the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Channel and an undefined eastern frontier. She ruled this area in 1748 directly from the Pyrenees to the Upper Rhine and from the line of the Sambre to the mouth of the Rhône, indirectly from Cadiz to Maastricht and from Cologne to Naples. She had become the supreme Power in Europe and it was not national will but statesmen that were lacking to use that position to renew her moral strength and financial prosperity.

France in 1748 threatened Britain more directly than at the end of the XVIIth century, since Hanover, the original seat of her ruling house, lay in France's strategic domain. Britain, to a certain extent, had returned to the Continent and was therefore vulnerable. That was revealed when, as a result of the Aix-la-Chapelle settlement, a new conflict arose and the Anglo-French colonial dispute was brought, in connection with the Seven Years' War, on to the battlefields of Europe.

The Britain of Pitt is now revealed. The sword of Frederick the Great is thrown into the English scale. France stands allied with Austria and Russia ; the system of alliances has been inverted. Britain fought unsuccessfully on land ; successfully overseas. The King of Prussia fought her battles. This time Britain held longer to her continental

alliance, but again not long enough. When she left Frederick in the lurch in 1762 France had been beaten and Canada had been conquered, but France had renounced neither the Rhine nor a renewal of the war; she armed herself for a *revanche*. France thought of recovering material of war and effective alliances; Britain applied herself to trade and fixed the payment of her war debts. France had actually made the first move in the new struggle against England before she signed the Peace of Paris. Choiseul, in the secret treaty of November 2, 1762, resigned Louisiana and New Orleans to the Spanish, ostensibly to compensate Spain for the loss of Florida, in reality because Spain and Britain would thus become hostile neighbours in North America and the Spanish Crown would be compelled to rely on French support.

A few years later, the revolt of the American colonies gave France the chance of revenge. In the spring of 1776, Silas Deane of Massachussetts arrived in Paris to ask for French help in the war with Britain. When the United States declared their independence on July 4, 1776, the helping hand of France was visibly in the background. On February 6, 1778, the colonists made an alliance with the French crown and shortly after the war of revenge was being waged on both sides of the Atlantic.

Britain fought a desperate battle with her revolting colonies and the Bourbon Powers, France and Spain, and in vain violated international law and " the freedom of the seas " in order to overcome her enemies. She could not recover her old superiority. When the French fleet appeared ready for battle on the high seas, when the Spanish threatened Gibraltar, when the Franco-American armies defeated the British troops and the reckless exercise of the right of capture at sea had earned her the hostility of Russia, Sweden, Holland and Denmark, a great political revolution of world import seemed to be approaching. But Britain survived this terrible hour, while she attacked everywhere where the opponent was weaker, stoically endured all defeats and no longer opposed the emancipation of the colonies. For the first time she abandoned a war, not because the enemy offered a separate peace, but because she felt herself beaten. She yielded when she realised that the struggle was wasting her strength and that not territorial

possessions and their commercial exploitation, but the superiority of her own commerce and industry and her control of the British seas gave her supremacy. On this realisation is founded Britain's competence for world dominion. No other sea Power has so instinctively realised this truth or so deliberately pursued the course of securing a far-reaching maritime policy against compromises. No other Power has understood so well as Britain how to make the offensive which is the characteristic of all sea Powers look like the strategic defensive. Britain always delays but, at the last moment, she never shirks from the trial of strength and then, in the eyes of the world, she seems to wage a defensive war which ends by bringing her in new possessions. By sea, she will fight offensively as long as her flag flies. The elder Pitt not only indicated the policy for a British naval war but for any naval war when he said: "A defensive war at sea is the prelude to certain disaster. A fleet can be compelled to stay on the defensive, but it cannot fight on a defensive system. The defensive is for it but a passing phase which is contrary to the nature of sea warfare." But, although this is true and although Britain in the war departed from this rule in order to exhaust Germany's total strength by blockade—in 1783 Britain had no alternative but to remain on the defensive. In that year, France, apparently threatened internally with dissolution but actually on the eve of revolutionary rebirth, was very nearly Britain's conqueror. The peace signed between France and Britain on September 3, 1783, only gave France back some African colonies and the Newfoundland fishing banks, but her fleets had displayed her flag in battle in the Mediterranean, in the Channel, off the American coast and in the Indian Ocean and had even threatened a landing in Ireland.

In 1762 and 1783 Britain was the victim of a tragic error. She did not realise that she must fight France on the Rhine if she wished to cripple the expansionism, the will to power and the political desire for revenge of the French nation. Only a France which is not fought on the Rhine can turn against insular Britain and contest Britain's world-authority and chain Britain to Europe.

History has afforded only twice an example of the truth of this dictum. The first time was in 1792 when the French

Revolution burst across the frontiers and France, having overrun the Netherlands, set foot on the Lower Rhine and the Channel coasts ; the second was in 1918 when in alliance with Britain and the United States France again appeared on the Rhine, united Belgium closely to her in a federal relation, and thereafter, for the sake of " security," advanced on both banks of the river from the Kinzig to the Ruhr.

When the younger Pitt, in February 1792, made the execution of Louis XVI the excuse for not recognising the revolutionary republic, and broke off relations with France, he did not obey an anti-revolutionary tendency but followed a policy of state. The war was aimed at the conqueror of the Netherlands. On this occasion, too, Britain apparently waged a defensive war to which an opponent had challenged her, and Pitt was careful not to take the step of declaring war. He left it to the Convention to declare war on Britain and Holland and then accepted the challenge. The British statesman had delayed as long as France fought within her frontiers, and was being driven back by the Allies from the Meuse, and only when the French conquered the Belgian glacis, marched on the mouth of the Scheldt and the Channel coasts, threatened Holland and, for the third time, sought to make themselves masters of Europe on the Rhine, did he step into the foreground ready for war. It was the decisive moment in the titanic war for the new settlement of Europe after the roar of the cannon of Valmy had died away.

Not only the ruling classes of Britain, which were incorporated in the aristocratic Parliament, stand behind Pitt, but " every man who had a coat to his back and a roof to his head," and with clenched teeth they fought on till the fall of the Titan who had succeeded, not only in concentrating the heritage of the revolution, but all Europe, into a French empire in order to destroy Britain.

Four coalitions were supported in this conflict by British money and sustained by the British fleet. Three broke up, while Britain for the first time in her history stayed in the war ; the fourth was stronger than Napoleonic France and overthrew the emperor. The geographical situation finally decided the issue in Britain's favour. The island kingdom having command of the seas survived the continental blockade

until the defeated nations of the Continent rose and the equilibrium of Europe was re-established on the ruins of the French empire. Waterloo, provoked and sustained by British pride, fought by an army two-thirds of which was Germanic, and turned into a victory by Prussian valour, guaranteed the peace of Europe, and the British dominion overseas. But Britain still felt herself threatened by France and did not withdraw from Europe although she escaped the complications of the Holy Alliance. She sought relief in a clever treaty system in order to restrict France without bringing her to destruction, and even helped her to recovery whenever the creation of the kingdom of the Netherlands and the appearance of Prussia on the Rhine assured her continental glacis against a French attack. No Power did more than Britain to establish the Bourbons firmly on Napoleon's throne. Britain then adhered to the idea of an alliance directed against France and distinct from the Holy Alliance, an idea that received expression in the Quadruple Alliance, but only until she could include France in it. Then it seemed to her that the balance of power had been restored, and so she turned against Prussia which sought to get possession, as a means towards security, of the Liège flank position, after Northern France had been evacuated; then she sought to recover her predominant position while she helped France to discharge her obligations, and to turn the Quadruple Alliance into a Pentarchy. Castlereagh, who conducted Britain's foreign policy, believed he could keep the Quadruple Alliance distinct from the Holy Alliance. He was quickly disillusioned, for France, after her recognition as fifth Power, came quickly into the foreground again, but whenever France threatened her interests in Spain Britain abandoned Castlereagh's treaty policy and retired to a purely insular policy.

At that date the power of Britain was still concentrated round the Thames. The empire had not yet become a community, although the Puritan idea of a chosen people which in the empire had acquired political form had already taken root in America. The imperialist idea only became potent in the age of Victoria. The Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny brought to a head the crisis from which emerged a new expansion of British power.

In the 'sixties of last century the transformation of the old Puritan idea of a divine mission into the idea of world dominion was completed. British politics from that date were carried on on the assumption that dominion over the world had been granted to the Anglo-Saxon. Expansion became permeation; the colonial empire was conceived as universal dominion and Britain began to turn away from Europe. As the European equilibrium had not been destroyed but had, on the contrary, been strengthened by the defeat of Bonapartist France and the rise to power of the German Empire as conceived by Bismark, Britain had no reason to abandon her overseas schemes. In this age of steam, of electricity and of industrialism, she proceeded in full command of the most remote parts of the globe to weld her empire together until her command of the ocean highways placed the whole world in her power.

She realised that her settlements across the seas needed to be connected territorially and she proceeded to annex the areas still unoccupied and to secure the inland frontiers so as to weld the conquests of three centuries into an organised whole. She halted the Russian advance on the Balkan range and on the Pamirs, gained control of the Suez Canal, conquered the Sudan, excluded the French from the Nile valley, hoisted the British flag over Cyprus, conquered the Transvaal with its goldfields, and at the beginning of this century when Victoria died and Edward VII came to the throne, had created an empire such as had not yet been seen, which was a solid organised creation on all five continents. To-day it has an area of 30,000,000 square kilometres and a population of 450,000,000, nearly three-quarters of which is in India.

This giant creation was protected by Britain's imperial might which was incarnated in her overwhelmingly powerful fleet. All alliances were discarded. British statesmanship after Pitt's policy of coalition, Castlereagh's treaty policy and Palmerston's intervention policy, adopted Salisbury's policy of " splendid isolation " and maintained this attitude as long as the balance of power was maintained as it had been arranged by Britain. British imperialism which for centuries thought of commercial supremacy consciously aimed at world dominion.

Britain felt herself now to be conscious of a world mission. She correctly estimated the resistance of native populations and foreign Powers to this mission and crushed it in order to incorporate the conquered districts to their own advantage in her world empire. She saw in the European Powers who, like her, cherished imperial ambitions intruders into her sphere who had no such divine mission. But she could not prevent the world being partitioned, She saw Russia in Asia and France in Africa ever coming closer and in Germany a formidable commercial rival. As, in face of this rivalry, splendid isolation no longer afford security, Britain at the beginning of this century cleverly changed her course and sought salvation once again in alliances to be made and abandoned at her pleasure. She felt herself no longer able to fight against the greatly strengthened Franco-Russian alliance and at the same time to maintain herself against Germany's commercial competition and the advance of that Power into the Turko-Arabian sphere. The equilibrium on the Continent had changed from a state of rest to one of dangerous oscillation and Britain's world position was now one of such complexity that she thought it necessary to have protection in Europe for her rear and a sword in Asia. She sought to come to an understanding with Germany in 1901 after cautious exploration of the ground in order, in case of need, to set that Power in motion against the East, but met with a refusal, since the Imperial policy shrank from concluding an agreement which, it was feared, would mean that Germany would be forced to serve British interests. Britain, therefore, used her freedom of action to turn against Germany and returned to the old policy of alliances against the strongest continental Power. Edward VII was the protagonist of the idea of alliances concluded without fettering Britain by them, secured Japan as a weapon against Russia in order to weaken Russian power in Asia, and abandoned Morocco to France in order to tie France's hands in the western Mediterranean and to relieve Britain's position in the Nile valley.

When Britain condescended to a new *Entente cordiale* with France, which this time was directed not against the Russia of Nicolas I but the Germany of William II, the situation in Europe was fundamentally altered and when, in the Morocco

negotiations, Britain stood by the side of France, Russia approached nearer to the *Entente* and Italy began to turn away from Central Europe, this alteration meant a change in the relations of the Powers far more drastic than the *renversement des alliances* in the XVIIIth century. But there was still no question of war; Britain's relation to the Powers encircling Germany had not yet become an armed alliance; Britain still maintained her traditional freedom of action. That freedom of action was lost only after the death of Edward VII when France concentrated her fleet in the Mediterranean and Britain took over the defence of France's Atlantic coast.

On November 23, 1912, the *Entente cordiale* by an exchange of letters between Grey and the French ambassador in London, Cambon, took the form of an agreement in event of war. This bound Britain so closely to France that French policy from now on was sure of British aid. It is possible that the British, in spite of this, did not yet think of war; it is possible that they imagined that they could overcome Germany by peaceful means.

Then the transformation of the Austro-Serbian dispute into an Austro-Russian conflict suddenly made possible a general war. When the Russian mobilisation tore down overnight the curtain that still concealed the long-prepared theatre of war, all Europe was set in motion. Yet Britain still delayed, true to tradition, to enter it. Grey, the successor of Pitt, Castlereagh and Palmerston, did not announce to Germany that Britain would fight by France's side, but served British interests by inviting the Powers to a conference. Britain waited until terrified Germany lost control and yielded to the pressure of the moment to take upon herself the odium of declaring war on Russia and France, in order to escape from the constraint of her geographical position, and in obedience to a strategic formula to seek a way by the old corridor of Belgium. Now Britain saw herself thrust into a war in which she thought to win again her superiority over the Continent and to clear Germany from the seas.

"Honour and interest" demanded her participation. "Honour" lay in the agreement with France which had surrendered her coasts to British protection; "interest" in the conviction that Germany must not win the war. Yet Britain

delayed to declare war, although by August 2nd she had inwardly decided to be a belligerent. The delay was a conscious calm awaiting of the psychological and historical moment. That came when the Germans entered Belgium and presented the British with a national and moral reason for war. Britain fought a European war " for Belgian neutrality." She fought again, though this time with a change of front, " for freedom and against despotism " and not unconsciously for the hegemony of the world.

In this war Britain staked all, but also brought up for settlement all the problems of power throughout the world. The World War was the touchstone of her world policy. But when it was won, and Britain saw herself in possession of South-west Africa, East Africa, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Arabia, more had happened than British interests demanded. Britain allowed the war to pass the critical point at which she should either have come out of it or ended it. She did not act as she did at Ryswick, Utrecht, Aix-la-Chapelle and Paris, but, as in Napoleonic days, remained involved in the gigantic struggle and fought on till the last day of it. Germany was broken in pieces and her fleet destroyed, but France again stood in triumph on the Rhine. Tsarist Russia was destroyed, but Revolutionary Russia was on the offensive from the Caucasus to Mongolia. The British Empire had increased its size by a fourth, but it was dissolved into a Commonwealth in which each Dominion which on European soil had fought for the motherland was eager for independence. Turkey was beaten and Constantinople saved from the Russians, but the Islamic world began to think in terms of nationalism and India to organise passive resistance to British rule. The United States had shed its blood " for the old country," but had become the creditor of the world. Freedom of action had been recovered, but it was again called in question by the addition of the League of Nations to the Peace Treaty and by the claim of France that the power of Britain should be in readiness to assure the safety of the French domination. Britain saw herself involved in the Rhine problem at a time when Asia was in movement and the Pacific question was casting its first serious shadow.

The relations between Britain and France became like those

in the XVIIIth century. The disarmament of Germany, her enslavement and mutilation, had deprived Britain of a counterpoise in her political conflict with France, once again arrived at hegemony. The war for the North Sea between Britain and Germany had ended in Germany's defeat, but it had so dominated British imagination that British statesmanship was no longer able to steer the British ship of state into the harbour before all others. France, as in Napoleon's days, appeared as a new " monster " threatening Britain.

France had not only received Alsace and Lorraine as promised, but the secret treaties concluded during the war were bearing fruit. The occupation of the Saar, the Palatinate and Rhenish Prussia again placed France in a position to secure supremacy and the abolition of Belgian neutrality had led to the closest connection being established between France and Belgium. Britain had once again lost the Flanders glacis on which in 1917 alone she had sacrificed 300,000 men. Three years after the conclusion of the deceptive Peace of Versailles, Britain saw the French, despite her protest, occupy the Ruhr and use the conflict in Asia to bind Britain to Europe.

For a moment it appeared that Britain had the intention to withdraw from the Continent, but she perceived that she must not leave to France the leadership in the League of Nations or the possession of the Rhine, and so she collected her strength for another effort. She was compelled to struggle with France in order to restore the balance of power which had been destroyed, in such a way as to recover her freedom of action in the Near and the Far East. The passive resistance which Germany opposed to the violence of France, made Britain resolve to continue that struggle. It was carried on in Geneva, in the chancelleries of the British Empire, in Berlin, and at the beginning of 1925 it had become a diplomatic struggle of unparalleled severity.

Only when Britain found impotent Germany ready to take part in the negotiations for a security pact and Belgium, alarmed at the unfriendly relations between Britain and France, began to revolt from the federal system established by France, did the hour strike that was to free her from her troubles. Britain returned in principle to the British policy of equilibrium, although this had undergone a notable trans-

formation by being now expressed in a policy of treaties concluded within the framework of the League of Nations.

The Rhine Pact which was signed in London on December 1, 1925, did not completely free Britain from her European anxieties. By it she can be called to fight in order to preserve the *status quo* on the Rhine, but it released her policy from dependence on the European situation and, especially, from dependence on French policy. Britain had reason to hail the issue of the struggle as a victory ; it was perhaps the greatest she had ever won on the diplomatic field.

To appreciate it one must not regard it from a West European point of view. The struggle was always regarded from the point of view of British world policy which was faced with formidable developments in the Eastern situation of which even to-day it is not master. When Britain at the end of the World War was in control of all the Arab lands, all Southwest Anatolia, West Turkestan, Persia and Afghanistan and saw not only the Germans but the Russians driven from China, she did not think of having to leave the ground she had won. She began to retreat only when America refused to enter the trap that was Asia Minor, when Turkey tore up the Treaty of Sèvres and new dangers loomed up in China. To-day Britain all over the East fights to retain her conquests. She still commands the line Alexandria–Constantinople, but in Egypt the ground is slipping from under her feet and Constantinople is no longer Turkey. She still fights for the control of the transversal Baku–Bagdad, but Persia has torn up the treaty which placed her military and financial resources, her lines of communication and her mineral wealth in British hands, has dethroned the last scion of the Kadjars and given herself a new monarch in Riza Khan who in 1921 came from Kasvin to Teheran to overthrow the Anglophile *régime*. Riza to-morrow might disappear, but there would still be the threat from Russia. Britain still holds the line which runs from the Shatt-el-Arab to the Jordan and rules in Palestine, Mesopotamia and Irak, but the Arabs demand autonomy. In the summer of 1919 Britain invaded Afghanistan, but was compelled to retreat to the Khyber Pass before an Afghan counter-attack and to come to an understanding with the Amir. Britain still rules India, but she must even there force herself to con-

cessions, and struggles against the growth of nationalism and against pan-Islam; two movements which cut across and hamper each other but are to-day so dangerous to British rule that, for the first time, Britain shrinks from a final trial of strength.

India is the basis of the British world-empire. If the Indian Empire attains the independence of a Dominion, Britain's girdle of strength is broken. By reason of their fundamentally Anglo-Saxon sentiment, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand are indissolubly tied to Britain, but India which sees 320,000,000 people held down by 80,000 foreigners will only be kept by fear in the British camp. That this fear in the course of centuries could be transformed to submissive recognition of British superiority will always earn Britain the admiration of history, but the British Empire which in the World War threw Indian divisions to their destruction at Tanga, Kut-el-Amara and Ypres and proclaimed the right of the peoples to self-determination only to deny that right in the Versailles settlement—Britain which in the League of Nations tolerates no other gods at her side, appears to the Indians to be no longer the unapproachable, infallible, supreme power, glorious in her obstinate, splendid isolation before which they bowed down in reverent obedience. To-day the British must base their rule in India on other *imponderabilia*. In the Far East they have obtained security only against foes from without. The defence of India, in spite of the advance of Bolshevism to the gates of Afghanistan, seems completely secure. The Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, have become British seas, the opposite coast of East Africa has been won and Singapore will be made the Gibraltar of Chinese waters. Australia is an offensive base in the Pacific and as a result of its southern position it connects the lines of sea power of the Pacific and the Atlantic and secures connection with Africa.

The sea line Singapore–Hongkong is to-day one of the most important for British sea power. When, in the spring of 1925, in her conflict with France over a European security pact, Britain declared that she could not pledge herself to an agreement which sought to secure world peace only from a European point of view, and confined itself to assuring the

European frontiers of European states, she acted as a maritime world-power and because of the Pacific problems that had not been solved. Britain cannot again lead the Dominions to a European war and has more at stake in eastern Asia and in the Pacific than in Europe.

If the British feel secure in their island and see the Continent at peace, that is enough for them. The war for the Rhine is already overshadowed by the war for the China seas. It is not between Cologne and Dover that great conflicts threaten, but between Singapore and Pekin. In such a conflict Britain sees herself threatened from the continental flank, where Soviet Russia intrigues and makes common cause with North China against West and East; and so she seeks to strengthen her maritime position by the construction of the Singapore base in order not to be behind Japan, which has already a superior position in Manchuria and is no longer Britain's ally.

In the World War Japan certainly secured Tsingtau and the claim to Shantung, for the peace settlement did not give the German concessions back to China, but granted them to the victor. She was not able, however, to preserve all her gains. She saw herself faced with a decisive struggle with America, feared the creation of an Anglo-Saxon combine and agreed to give back her conquests to China. She secured thereby a protection for her rear and at the same time the possibility of creating a continentally-conceived east Asiatic front, but Britain lost her sword on the Asiatic continent and Japan lost her naval ally. To-day England is confronted in isolation by awakening China, Soviet Russia and her old ally. Her eastern Asiatic and Pacific policy is not thereby broken, but it is no longer purely British; it has become Anglo-Saxon. The British Empire and the United States in spite of the rivalry between them are to-day compelled to co-operate.

This was already perceptible at the Peace Conference. Wilson in 1919 had entered into commitments not only in Europe, but also in Asia, which his country could not undertake without endangering the extraordinarily strong central position which it had won in the war. The United States could neither support the imperialist claims of France on the Rhine nor admit the imperialist claims of Japan on the

Yangtse-kiang. The battle which Wilson waged with the Japanese in Paris brought him into a far more dangerous position than the war for the settlement of Europe which he waged with France. The idea of a League of Nations was no help to him in his difficulties and he was beaten on both fronts. His European and his Asiatic policy came to grief on the rocks of the secret agreements into which Britain, France, Italy and Japan had entered during the war. Destiny avenged Germany on the statesman who did not keep his word to her when it condemned him to abandon the essential part of America's Chinese policy, that is, the integrity of the Middle Kingdom and the " open door " and to agree to all that was essential in the Japanese demands. Wilson fell, but the United States did not admit defeat and in 1921 placed their Pacific policy on new bases. They secured the initiative by inviting the Powers to a disarmament conference. This conference marks a new point of departure in the history of the Pacific.

When Britain, France, Japan, Italy, China, Belgium, Holland and Portugal, on November 12, 1921, met at Washington under the presidency of the United States in order to reach agreement on the position in the Far East, the disarmament question was the main item on the programme, but it was speedily put in the shade by the general discussion on the Pacific question. Yet the Pacific problem received no solution, although no fewer than eight treaties were signed. Struggles for power, and for markets and the search for mineral wealth are not ended by treaties whose real importance is the fact that they define the new positions of the combatants. That was the case at Washington.

Britain, France, Japan and the United States made an agreement which guaranteed the *status quo* in the Pacific and meant the dissolution of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. By two further agreements, the nine Powers present recognised the principle of the " open door " and the new arrangements of the Chinese tariffs. Three treaties arranged for the restoration of Kiauchau to China, the transference to China of the German rights and concessions acquired by Japan, recognised the rights of America on the cable island of Yap occupied by the Japanese, and the division of the German cable between America, Britain, France, Japan, Holland and Portugal. In

a seventh treaty Japan recognised the integrity of Eastern Siberia and the eighth treaty contained the agreement on naval armaments, whereby the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan were confined to a certain fighting strength and sufficiently defined strategic positions.

When this disarmament treaty was brought up for discussion something entirely unexpected happened. The Anglo-Saxon Powers appeared united against Asiatic Japan and European France. They fought not always, indeed, on a single front, but always guided by common interests, for a decrease in armament by sea and by land in order to maintain themselves in the positions they had won and avoid new complications. Then the new states-system of Europe for the first time asserted itself outside the Versailles sphere. Briand declared in the name of France that the French Republic in view of "the German menace" could not reduce its powerful land armaments and so maintained his country in possession of supremacy in the old Continent.

The attempt of Britain to induce France on the Potomac to retreat from the Rhine back to the Versailles treaty miscarried from the start, in spite of American support. When France declared herself prepared to consent to a reduction of naval armaments, the British and the Americans were thrown on the defensive. Here they successfully maintained their position by entering into reciprocal and simultaneous obligations and also committing their opponents thereto and so strengthened their positions in the Pacific; but France won in Europe the greatest success. The signatories to the treaty pledged themselves to submit submarines to the rules laid down for cruisers in war against merchant ships, to use no poison gas at sea, to build no light cruisers of more than 10,000 tons, for ten years to build no more battleships, to erect no new fortifications in a defined Pacific area while the strength of the British and American battleship fleets was placed at 525,000 tons, of the Japanese 315,000 tons, of the French and the Italian 175,000 tons, and the highest calibre of any naval gun fixed at 40.61 centimetres.

Those figures imply an American-British and a French-Japanese understanding. Britain and America maintained their positions; France and Japan came out of the conflict

stronger than before. The sea power of the British and the Americans was from now on superior to the Japanese fleet which watches Japan's Pacific coasts, only if their fleets fought united. But neither Power can acquiesce in this. When Japan next year gradually turned to Russia and France was preparing to march into the Ruhr, Britain and America automatically came closer to one another. Britain, not America, appeared the leading Power. She had so drawn the boundaries of the non-fortifiable zone in the Pacific that neither the Malay peninsula nor the New Zealand and Australian coasts were included in it, and two years later proceeded to construct at Singapore a base of operations in the Pacific. The United States, however, turned to Europe and threw the weight of their financial predominance into the struggle for the Rhine. Britain concluded a debt agreement with the world's creditor; the Dawes plan began to take shape; France was admonished by America with regard to the payment of her debt. New prospects began to open out.

The relations between Britain and America were again arranged at Washington on February 6, 1922. The United States had fought for Britain in the World War, for they were summoned by a fellow-feeling for " the old country " and in their own world interests to the battle which to young America was seen as a war of ideas of a religious type; they had turned their back on Europe because they feared to be definitely involved there and they returned, clothed in the impenetrable armour of the Monroe doctrine when it was important to avoid the chaos into which the world threatened to fall, to remind France of her debt and to purge the memory of Wilson from the stains incurred at Versailles.

The community of sentiment between the Anglo-Saxon nations had found its greatest champion in Wilson. In 1919 he had come to Europe as an enthusiast to bring salvation to the world and to punish those who, in December 1916, had refused to bow before his judgment seat. He would rather have destroyed Europe altogether than renounced this mission. The League of Nations was conceived by him as a pacifist world domination of the Anglo-Saxon nations. The fate of Germany did not matter a straw in this policy which was world-wide in its range. Despite the weakness to which

his ambition condemned him in Paris he was still the man of world destiny and at the same time the champion of a mystically-conceived Anglo-Saxon supremacy.

The most significant achievement of Versailles is due, not to Britain and the Dominions, but to the influence of Wilson, who in the war had thrown the weight of America into the scales and had thereby achieved a decision of world-wide significance. The United States became a world-power and one of the Powers which settled the fate of Europe, even although its Senate refused to ratify the Peace Treaty.

It cannot now completely cut itself off from Europe. It has emerged from the war—the first in which it fought on foreign soil by the side of Britain—nationally strengthened and has set new objectives before it in American and in world politics. From the mouth of the Sacramento to the Panama Canal it stands arrayed against Asia and seeks to control from the centre the exterior flank of Canada and the interior flank of Mexico, in order to act with all its strength in the Pacific, but it has greater interest in the maintenance of the peace of Europe than possibly it realises.

In 1924 this interest was economically expressed in the Dawes plan; in 1925 it took on a political aspect clearly recognisable though carefully veiled. It was important that France, which in Washington had boasted of its land power and had refused to reduce its armaments, should be forced, though covertly and without any open intervention by America in a European crisis, to retreat from the Ruhr, and to return to the Versailles treaty. The shadow of America stood behind Britain when on December 1, 1925, she invited Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia to sign the Rhine Pact and the great arbitration treaties. The Pacific problem demanded an Anglo-American concentration in the Far East and so both required the maintenance of the peace of Europe much more for political, than ever they will for economic, reasons. The Anglo-Saxon *condominium mundi* begins to emerge from the world chaos.

But where in all this is Germany's place; Germany which in all the negotiations appears as object and no longer possesses power; Germany which in Versailles had to await outside the gates and behind the bars of a zoological garden a

treaty which left her deprived of all rights and privileges; Germany which as a dispossessed colonial Power was not invited to Washington; Germany which first found a door open to her when in the last hour before the collapse of Europe her aid was needed to obtain a security pact; Germany for which to-day there is nowhere " a place in the sun " ? In attempting to answer that question the mirage character of the Versailles settlement is clearly seen.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRAGIC RÔLE OF GERMANY

ALTHOUGH these pages have not specifically treated of Germany, its tragic position is already plainly visible. In 1919, Germany once again sank to be the object of the policy of the surrounding states, but despite her impotence she retains an importance that demands respect, despite her mutilated frontiers she remains a geographical personality, despite her internal inchoateness and her weakly established republican form of government she continues to be a nation firmly fixed in the heart of Europe and striving towards recovery. The struggle of Germany for existence and for the restoration of the German Reich to the position of a sovereign Power influences the course of events more essentially than the confusion of this conflict allows one to perceive. The position of Germany and the German people in the new order in Europe has become the cardinal problem of European politics and as such influences the whole world.

When the Peace Treaty was completed and was united with the League of Nations Covenant in one document, the victorious Powers sought in the Preamble to refer the origin of the World War to the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia and to the German declarations of war on Russia and France, as well as to the entry of German troops into Belgium in order to justify the conditions which they imposed on the vanquished. They thus secured a foundation on which they could build at will, but they weakened the treaty by connecting it with an assertion which remained to be proved. Whenever it is historically demonstrated that causal connections showed that Germany and her Allies were not the promoters of the war, not merely does the assertion fall to the ground but the moral basis of the treaty is wrecked. The framers of the Versailles treaty knew the weakness of their position. Therefore the eighth chapter of the treaty, which deals with " reparations " and includes the demands for deliveries of the indemnities which Germany must pay her conquerors, is

buttressed by a special "war guilt paragraph." That, too, was a mistake, for this paragraph has stamped itself ineffaceably on the political consciousness of the German nation. Had this forced confession of guilt not appeared above the gate of peace through which the German people passed to the inferno of the post-war period, the reaction against the treaty would have been much more difficult than it is to-day. It is not so much the political intelligence as the moral sense of the Germans which rises up against the assertion that they—aye, and they alone—are guilty of the war. They consider the treaty because of this an immoral document and it was a political error on the part of the *Entente* Powers to bring that to their notice.

It is no part of my task to enquire into "war guilt." Article 231 of the Versailles treaty had no other aim than to justify the treaty in the eyes of the world and before history. The indictment of Germany as peace-breaker is, so to say, the moral foundation of the treaty, which being an instrument of coercion—on foundations worthy of Machiavelli at his worst—has no connection with morality.

On this admission of guilt, no proper treaty was allowed to Germany, but in 400 articles pains, punishments and penalties were meted out to her and war, as such, which hitherto had been recognised as a historical phenomenon and ranked as "an act of human intercourse," was proclaimed an act worthy of punishment, the punishment being retrospective. No non-party tribunal delivered judgment and the question of guilt remained unexplored. It was simply taken as proven that Germany willed the war and had caused it; a legend was made a political instrument, the archives of the other nations were kept shut up, the history of half a century was passed over in silence, and all that was retained was the fact that at the last moment Germany had let herself be manœuvred into the rôle of the aggressor and had under the pressure of circumstances violated the neutrality of Belgium, (a neutrality which had been compromised by Belgium herself but was upheld by foreign Powers), without adducing the authority of any diplomatic instrument of the past, making claim, for instance, to a right of occupation under the treaties establishing Belgium, or tempting the enemy to march in first.

The Versailles treaty cannot be carried out. Not only because it places Germany in an impossible position by demanding enormous sums and deliveries from her, and at the same time takes from her any possibility of restoring herself through the unhindered development of her commerce and industry and of making her whole economic domain serve this end, but also because its fulfilment will require such a length of time as cannot be defined in a treaty.

Nor does the treaty possess the character of a world treaty. It was not accepted and signed by all the belligerent Powers. Russia and the United States, certainly not the smallest of them, have held aloof from it. It is equally not a world law or even a European law. But, nevertheless, it weighs crushingly upon Germany, on Europe, on the world and on the League of Nations, which is tied to it. It has left Germany without a single legal title in the world, but the victors have quarrelled over the division of such titles; it has mutilated Germany's frontiers but the new frontiers have not organised, but broken up, the European area; it has disarmed Germany and introduced the fifth chapter which deals with disarmament with the decorative sentence: "In order to render possible the commencement of a universal reduction of the armaments of all nations," but the world is armed as it never was armed before. It declared the existence of a state of peace, but it has paved the way for a new war danger—armed invasion with a view to the securing of territorial pledges; it devised every conceivable means to keep Germany down, but France did not hesitate to fill the air with cries that she lacked security completely, until in 1925 a new treaty was signed which is intended to guarantee France security and to give Europe that peace again which once more is founded on a German renunciation.

When on February 2, 1925, Germany sent a memorandum to Paris that at once superseded the Anglo-French Pact negotiations and turned the two-Power coquetting into a three-Power negotiation, Germany entered a field on which her enemies had marked out all the boundaries and secured all the advantages. No Power had known how to make use of the League of Nations to this end so consciously and so comprehensively as France.

At Washington France had successfully refused to reduce

her land armaments and next year at Geneva procured a League of Nations resolution in which it was expressly stated that the general situation would not allow a certain number of Governments to assume the responsibility of reducing their armaments in so far as no comprehensive guarantees had been able to be obtained for the security for their territory. This resolution strengthened France's position in her diplomatic struggle with Britain, permitted the federal relation between herself and Poland and Czechoslovakia to appear the result of military necessity and justified her alarming military effort. When, in 1924, the League of Nations proceeded to a revision of the Covenant in order to strengthen Articles 15 and 16 and thereby to bar the way to war and before all things to provide that the aggressor should be recognised as such beyond the possibility of doubt and that every conceivable type of dispute should be submitted to arbitration, France not only appeared in the front rank of the supporters and defenders of the "Protocol," but made herself its foremost champion. France took up this attitude because the Protocol satisfied her on all essential points, surrounded her dominant position with the strongest international legal guarantees, and was a useful weapon in her conflict with Britain.

The Protocol lays it down that solutions which have already been the object of a unanimous recommendation of the League of Nations and have been accepted by one of the interested parties shall not again be brought before an arbitration court; that the rights which France derives from the Treaty of Versailles and has had protected at Geneva shall be permanently confirmed to her. This finely-wrought peace instrument which lacks nothing of perfection save the elimination of the League war as the last and most elementary *casus belli*, is nothing but a universal guarantee of the hegemony of France which is built upon the subjection of Germany. It was rejected by Britain in her own interest because the Dominions did not wish thus to bind themselves, but the world which believed the peace of Europe would be assured if the new document was accepted accused Britain of cold egoism and turned again adoringly to France.

The rejection of the Geneva Protocol not only marks the most important stage of international treaty-policy which

to-day takes the place of the old historic policy of the balance of power, but has also influenced decisively the Anglo-French Pact policy. France, which in Washington had frustrated disarmament on land, stands now before the world as the champion of peace although she had just previously allowed her claim to her formidable armaments to be confirmed by the League. It was a triumph for the policy of *doulce et couverte conduite* which Briand as the spiritual successor of Richelieu carried to victory in the shadow of the brutal methods of Poincaré. It was no less aimed against Germany than Poincaré's advance from the Rhine to the Ruhr and drove Britain from the foreground of the settlement stage. But it soothed passions instead of rousing them and Briand waved the peace-palm while Poincaré rattled the sabre of Foch.

When France proceeded to prepare her plan of organisation in the League Council to regulate the exercise of the right of control in those lands which, by the Versailles treaty, must submit to inspection through the League, France dug up another treasure from the inexhaustible soil of this unfathomable treaty. She sought through it to subject Germany to a permanent military control, as the Protocol expressly lays it down that the League Council is empowered to see to the inspection of the demilitarised zone by permanent commissions established within it. This, too, goes far beyond what was settled at Versailles. The Rhineland and the demilitarised 50 kilometres which is forbidden to German troops or armaments would thus be subjected permanently to a military control, ostensibly international, but actually French. Through this provision, France assured the departing Inter-Allied Control Commissions of a successor not provided by the Versailles treaty. Article 213 of the Peace Treaty, which obliges Germany to facilitate in every way any investigation which the League Council by majority vote thinks necessary, is entirely distorted thereby. The temporary control which was provided for in the interior of Germany becomes a permanent arrangement on both banks of the Rhine. As France is established militarily on the river and to-day commands the strategic area from Düren to Landau in which its advance guards of 72,000 men stand ready to march, this control is nothing but the securing of France's offensive position. This was the last

effort France made at Geneva before Germany entered the Anglo-French Pact negotiations. It was not so considered by the League, but appeared to it as the real and clear solution of one of the many fundamental questions to the settlement of which the League is called as the executive instrument of the Peace Treaty. But it not only concealed an attack on Germany's unprotected flank, but was also a blow against Britain which saw her position in the conflict over the evacuation of the Ruhr and the restoration of Cologne weakened after the rejection of the Geneva protocol. Then the British sought Germany as an aid to their diplomacy. They let Germany understand that they would not be averse from concentrating their pact policy which had begun with an Anglo-America-French defensive alliance, then was concerned with a Anglo-French offensive and defensive alliance and finally on an Anglo-French guarantee pact directed against Germany, on the conclusion of a peace pact which would be all-embracing, would include Germany and would guarantee security equally to the German people. Germany was called to negotiations in which all was at stake. A great political opportunity offered itself; a great historical moment approached. German statesmanship had twice made offer of a pact to give security and to receive it, but each time the hand that offered met but empty air. Now the Germans saw themselves faced with a decision which threatened unknown dangers but also offered inestimable advantages.

At the beginning of 1925 the Germans were confronted with the questions: what could they do, what could they leave undone? Actual freedom of action they did not possess, for that, in international relations, belongs only to a nation which advances to the conference table sure of its own strength. Nor was long time given them for reflection. As Britain had rejected the Geneva Protocol, France, surrounded by newly-awakened sympathy, had pressed for more intimate connection with the individual states in her federal system and for the conclusion of the Anglo-French Pact which had been in process of consideration for over a year. The Ruhr was not yet evacuated, the evacuation of Cologne was delayed, the military control of German armaments and German factories was stricter and more vexatious than ever. The political situation

of Germany was that of a completely isolated state robbed of all means of defence and maintenance and placed in a geographical position of constraint; its strategic situation was that of a corridor land with its frontiers exposed, its glacis lost, its most important economic regions in the west and the east in the possession of its enemies. Behind the fronts it had not a single defensive line left except the Elbe line which is threatened on the inner flank, and was open to attack in the west up to the Weser–Jagst–Iller line, in the east up to the Oder line. The encirclement was so complete by sea and by land that the strategic advantage of defence on interior lines had already been discounted by the tactical disadvantage of being cramped in a circumscribed area; the economic situation was marked by the Dawes payments, the deflation crisis and tariff wars and appeared terribly critical.

But a mighty strength still lived in the outraged German Reich, the strength which was given to the German people as an indispensable, highly organised and active member of the European community and, especially, as the most centrally placed member of that community. Germany was not able to raise herself without help, but those who held her down had used up their own strength in the effort and were condemned to perish with this nation of 60,000,000 people if it succumbed under the burdens placed upon it.

If, at the beginning of 1925, we look back from the German standpoint at the Versailles creation it is clearly seen that at Versailles unspeakable things were done. The mirage of Versailles was first recognised to be a mirage when Europe was considered as a community, and it was realised that the violation and enslavement of Germany, the heart of the wilfully broken and scattered European system, meant the destruction of all the other states in this age when politically and economically all states are intimately connected one with another. The Treaty of Versailles enshrines an irrational political idea.

Germany sought to fulfil the unfulfillable treaty and therefore showed to some extent the fact that it was unfulfillable. She was invited to Spa, to Genoa, to London, to conferences in order to receive orders whereby Britain and France sought to increase the proceeds of German servitude and at the same time to prevent her recovery; she had submitted to the Dawes

scheme which placed the politically conceived reparations problem on an international economic basis; she had let economic and territorial sanctions be enforced upon her on the Rhine and thereby saw her authority uprooted and expelled from the land; saw the Rhine railways in French hands, saw hundreds of thousands of men in peace-time expelled from their homes and thus robbed of the most elementary right of man, saw hundreds flung into prison, heard sentences of death passed, and listened to more than five hundred decrees being proclaimed, of which no treaty knew anything; she had endured the loss of Upper Silesia, the treatment of the Saar in violation of the treaty, the war operations in the Ruhr basin and in the territory of Baden, and was now threatened with the conclusion of a Rhine pact which was nothing else but an Anglo-Franco-Belgo-Polish armed alliance prepared beforehand by France, which would assure French hegemony on the Rhine, would give foreign armies the right of passage through Germany and leave her no legal rights at all. That appeared all the more dangerous as France's internal weakness was not yet apparent and Britain in her diplomatic struggle with France considered only British interests and declined to defend what was important to Europe and to Germany.

But was it not tempting providence for Germany, after such experiences and in such circumstances, once again to claim a conference, to which Britain invited her certainly not without the foreknowledge of France? Would not Germany do better if she obstinately clung to the rôle of object forced on her at Versailles and so compelled Britain to change her front? It is possible to negotiate out of weakness and in the feeling of growing strength deny oneself. Could Germany if she entered the Anglo-French negotiations protect German rights and interests or would her best cards simply be shared among her opponents?

Herein lay the terrible dilemma before which Germany was placed in the beginning of 1925 when the internal struggle had reached its height in the presidential election and the aged Hindenburg, a visible incarnation of the categorical imperative of duty, was raised to the presidency of the Republic in place of the able statesman Friedrich Ebert who had died in harness.

Germany resolved to negotiate. She sought to avoid the

threatened alliance of the outlying Powers by letting her readiness to enter a general security pact be recognised by a general communication to France and Britain. On June 16th came France's answer. It utilised the comprehensive character of the German communication which permitted the raising of theoretical questions to specify the French demands and to establish a basis of negotiations acceptable to France. As the most important condition France demanded Germany's entry into the League of Nations and the recognition of France as guarantor of all the separate treaties concluded by Germany with Poland and Czechoslovakia. Germany saw herself by this clever move forced on the defensive and at the same time kept to her acceptance of the conference. It was no longer possible for her to demand her acceptance as a League member under special conditions as the preliminary condition of a security pact, and so to blunt the Versailles and Geneva treaty policy of France which was directed against Germany before the security pact was discussed. She would no longer refuse to enter the League of Nations, a step which had been made dependent upon the entry into force of the pact. The treaty system erected by the League Powers under France's able leadership above the Wilsonian Covenant could be entered now only by a Germany which appeared bound to the surrounding states by separate treaties.

Germany did not permit herself to be discouraged. She resolved to take the fateful path which would lead her from isolation and banishment back into the concert of Europe, which so far had ordered things at its pleasure because of German impotence, and thus hoped to break the Central European encirclement. On July 25th she sent a message to Paris that she was ready to discuss all questions which might arise, but refused the French guarantee of arbitration treaties concluded between her and Poland and between her and Czechoslovakia. She declared that the conclusion of an arbitration treaty must influence the situation in the west and bring to Germany a great alleviation of the position on the Rhine and demanded with reference to a memorial which had been addressed to the League of Nations that she, as a disarmed Power situated in the centre of Europe, should not have to assume the obligations laid down in Article 16 of the Covenant.

Germany fought simultaneously on two fronts on the narrow basis which she secured by this note. The struggle for the security pact and over the entry into the League could not now be separated. Once again Germany's position was defensively conceived. That, however, was conditioned more by the general political situation than was indicated by the tactics adopted by Germany. Germany, as a result of the position of constraint created on the Rhine, in view of the fortress of paragraphs built up in Geneva and in consequence of her military defencelessness and her economic dependence on world markets was not capable of occupying an offensive position and of demanding more than her historic opponent France, after the latter's agreement with Britain and with the League as executive instrument of the Versailles settlement, was prepared to grant her in advance.

Britain and France played the great game move by move. On the day when the German note arrived the French troops began to evacuate the Ruhr and by July 30th the last soldier had left the area which had been occupied as security. On August 5th the Conference of Ambassadors gave up the "sanction towns" of Düsseldorf, Duisburg and Ruhrort. Six days later, Britain and France agreed on the joint diplomatic procedure for the conclusion of a security pact which would free Britain's hands in Irak and the China seas and France's in Morocco and Syria after a mutual understanding had been reached. Britain allowed France and Spain to take the offensive in Morocco and to issue an ultimatum summoning Abd el-Krim to submit and acceded to the agreement which had been concluded by the two Powers on the administration of Tangier. France promised Britain her support as a member of the League Council in the conflict over Mosul and advanced in Syria to suppress by force the rebellion in the plain and in the Lebanon.

When the representatives of Britain, France and Germany met in London at the end of August in order to make the preliminary arrangements for the conference in which the security pact and the arbitration treaties connected with it would be discussed and drawn up, Germany felt herself violently swept into the powerful current of world happenings on the banks of which she had till then stood, set aside, estranged and hesitating.

Britain and France negotiated with disconcerting speed. On October 16th the treaties which created a new "security system" were initialled at Locarno by the Ministers of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Eleven days had been spent grappling with the treaties without adding anything essential to them or altering either their intention or their basis. Britain acted as mediator, although she never abandoned the position she had taken up by the side of France, while France, surrounded by her client states, played the part of a seeker after peace with complete becomingness. But Germany saw herself forced to fight from the beginning rather for the peace of Europe than for her own salvation, for she could not do impossibilities and stood prisoned between the Versailles treaty and the League statute. So it came about that the German representatives could take up no other position than that which their enemy was willing to leave them.

The treaties, which were signed on December 1, 1925, in London, bear the stamp of the urgency of the situation. The main treaty gathered the Rhine problem, which had determined the history of Europe for 2,000 years, into the tightly drawn net of the French principle of security. Historically treated, it carried the struggle for the Rhine back to the days of Utrecht when France saw herself for the first time forced on the defensive and retired from the right and left banks without renouncing her position of domination. It is no accident that at that time a French writer on the philosophy of history, the Abbé Castel de St. Pierre, had sketched a "covenant" of the Wilsonian type which would guarantee the "security" of his own country in the conquered territory and the peace of Europe.

The security pact which to-day guarantees to France the Versailles frontier settlement, protects Germany from French aggression and relieves Britain of unconditional and immediate guarantee of the French position, bears the signatures of Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Italy. It is expressly introduced as a security and protective treaty which will assure peace in a region "which has been so often the scene of European conflicts" and will give "supplementary guarantees" to the signatory Powers within the framework

of the League Covenant and the treaties in force between them.

The first article guarantees to the signatories the maintenance and inviolability of the territorial *status quo* resulting from the frontiers laid down in the treaty of peace concluded on June 28, 1919, and guarantees expressly the observance of the conditions relating to the demilitarised zone laid down in Articles 42 and 43 of that treaty. The first article thus contains a recognition and a confirmation of the western frontiers laid down in the treaty and of the 50 kilometres zone on the right bank of the Rhine. It refers the Franco-German frontier back to July 18, 1870, the Belgo-German frontier to June 28, 1919, and reserves to France the Saar basin if the plebiscite provided for in the Versailles treaty and to be held in 1934 goes in France's favour. Alsace and Lorraine are guaranteed to France.

The second article obliges Germany and Belgium and Germany and France reciprocally in no case to proceed to an attack or an invasion or a war and allows to this fundamental and mutual guarantee of peace only three exceptions which permit of warlike measures under special circumstances. The clause is applicable first if it is a case of exercising the right of self defence and resistance to a violation of the state of peace thus guaranteed or of repelling a flagrant violation of Articles 42 or 43 of the Versailles treaty in so far as such violation represents an unprovoked act of aggression and by reason of the assembly of armed forces in the demilitarised zone makes immediate action necessary; secondly, if it is a question of measures taken under Article 16 of the Covenant; and thirdly, if action is taken as the result of a decision taken by the Assembly or Council of the League or in pursuance of Article 15, paragraph 7, of the Covenant which gives League members the right to take action at will if the report of the Council on the peaceful settlement of the dispute is not unanimously approved.

So far as one can understand the content of the article as a prohibition of war, a renunciation of the use of force as the last weapon of policy, it exhausts under the terms of war, attack and invasion, all cases which have as yet been considered hostile acts and so places constraint on all the signatories. France and Belgium cannot go to war to extend the positions

won at Versailles. Germany cannot go to war to remove the barriers erected at Versailles. If the first section of this main clause is clear, the second section which speaks of the exceptions is the more ambiguous. It has not succeeded in explaining the terms "attack" and "unprovoked attack" on which everything depends. That is natural—as these terms, strategically understood, are exceedingly complex. In the clear definition of these terms which must first be regarded from the strategic viewpoint and be treated as complementary to and in connection with the term "defence" in order to be capable of closer definition the Geneva Protocol had already failed. With the juridical statement that the term "attack" contains two elements, the violation of an obligation and the use of force, we are no further forward.

The second article of the Rhine Pact in its first section contains a fundamental, if limited, security of peace for France, Belgium and Germany, which appears lessened for the last named as the demilitarisation of the zones on the left and right banks of the Rhine is carried through exclusively on German territory and the establishment of a flagrant violation of the obligations incurred by Germany and especially the establishment of the fact whether German troop concentrations are taking place in the neutral zone is left entirely to France and Belgium which otherwise would be unable to act at once.

The third article endeavours to support the second by laying it down that Germany and Belgium and Germany and France are obliged to settle only by peaceful methods all disputes and quarrels which cannot be settled by the usual procedure. And certainly disputes on questions of law are to be submitted to arbitrators whose decision is binding on the parties in the case, but disputes of any other type are to be brought before a conciliation commission from which the parties must appeal to the League of Nations if agreement is not reached. The Council then deals with the matter under Article 15 of the Covenant.

In this article the effort is made to guarantee Germany, France and Belgium in every case against settling a quarrel by war before every method of peaceful settlement has been tried and failed. By the provision that, in the last instance, there is an appeal to the League, Germany sees herself pro-

tected against sanctions, pledge-takings and reprisals unless the Council decided against Germany in the end by not being unanimous, or unless France, taking advantage of the second exception mentioned in the second article and alleging a flagrant attack against Article 42 or 43 of the Versailles treaty, took action at once.

In order to remove this insecurity the Pact in its fourth and fifth articles seeks to impose new constraints by pledging the signatories to have recourse to the League the moment a violation of the second article or an attack on Article 42 and Article 43 of the Versailles treaty is perpetrated, and by placing the third article under the guarantee of the signatories which is found in the mutual help to be afforded to any signatory threatened by a violation of the treaty.

These ingenious and subtle articles are sufficient to ensure the maintenance of peace on the Rhine so long as France in her position of superiority does not claim for herself the right to interpret the treaty. If France follows the classic rule of her Rhine policy she will remember the letter which the French representative Servien wrote to Mazarin and Louis XIV after the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia: *Je crois qu'il se faudra contenter que chaque explique le traité comme il l'entend;* if she follows the policy to which she owes the possession of Alsace, a policy which brought about her greatest triumphs in the interpretation of the Versailles treaty, the Rhine Pact will afford no greater security to Germany than the Peace of Westphalia assured to the Holy Roman Empire. But it must be said that France would find it much more difficult to-day to set herself against a single treaty when this has become part of a system that claims to have world authority and would be shattered if the Rhine Pact, which was treated by Europe in her need for peace as salvation from the oppressive and unjust post-war conditions, should be interpreted unilaterally against Germany and also against the peace of Europe.

The salient fact that the whole treaty is built up on a historic renunciation on the part of Germany and the German people will never be got rid of. At Locarno Germany recognised the Versailles frontiers and said regretful farewell to Strasbourg. But Alsace has not yet found peace, and in spite of her political affinities with the west must defend her German

character in the French unitary state if she is not to become a " military frontier district " or a French Rhine-colony.

Germany has given up the strategic forward area which protected South Germany from French attack and has abandoned Eupen and Malmédy (which were lost by a plebiscite falsified by circumstances), in order to secure peace. She hoped at the same time to free the Saar, the Palatinate and Rhenish Prussia from the chains which to-day weigh so heavily on these lands. Germany was not able to secure terms which would bring nearer the liberation of the second and third zones of occupation and the plebiscite to settle the fate of the Saar basin, but saw herself compelled to accept the sixth article of the Locarno agreement which expressly stipulates that the Rhine Pact leaves intact all rights and duties which the contracting parties to the Versailles treaty and its complements, including the Dawes agreement, received or incurred, and saw herself bound by the seventh article not to interpret the treaty so as to usurp the function of the League, which is authorised to apply measures required for the preservation of peace.

Germany thus submitted to all the laws and precedents imposed upon her at Versailles, Geneva and London. But the signatories to the Rhine Pact and to the arbitration treaties are no longer in a position which allows them to treat Germany as a pariah among the nations by reason of the treaty, they are compelled to let the mutilated, but unbroken, German Reich count again in the counsels of the nations so far as a continental state, geographically placed in a position of constraint, robbed of all her overseas domains and groaning under military and economic obligations, can maintain herself, thanks to her innate natural strength, in the community of the Great Powers and their client states. The Western Pact is not an alliance ; it is neither a three-Power nor a five-Power league. It may perhaps be best described as establishing a triangular relationship which is recognised by Belgium and Italy and dominated by Britain. By it Britain represents the male element in that she can be summoned to help by either of her chief co-signatories and can choose between them, according to British interests, without being permanently bound.

Germany in the tenth and last article accepts still another

important constraint. In this article it is laid down that the Pact will only enter into force when Germany has become a member of the League of Nations. Thereby, Germany saw herself at once invited and compelled, but a glance shows us that actually Pact and League of Nations are closely connected and that the inclusion of the League as the last mediatory, juridical and negotiating tribunal is calculated to guarantee to defenceless Germany to a great extent security among and over against the Powers. Germany's entry into the League is thus not only laid down in the Rhine Pact and in the arbitration treaties as a *conditio sine qua non* but was preconditioned by the existing political situation. It was determined *a priori* by the return of Germany to active life.

The alleviations which Germany sought to secure at Locarno relative to the occupation of the Rhineland are kept apart from the treaty as such. They appear only in the form of the evacuation of the Cologne zone, the abolition of the Franco-Belgian administration, the limitation of military jurisdiction and, perhaps, the reduction of the occupation forces. These are thus measures which were due, but they are lost in the great political complex to which they have been subordinated instead of serving as a key to its solution and so have no essential significance. The German nation is not in a position to see in these " retro-actions " anything but unessential decorations which do not appear to be organically part of the text of the Security Pact and the provisions therein laid down. Policy uses such adornments without inscribing them in the book of history.

The test of the Rhine Pact is not to be sought in " retro-actions " but in connection with the problems of general disarmament and above all in connection with the position of Germany in the League.

The Rhine Pact was signed by Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Germany. Switzerland and the Netherlands remained aloof from it, although they have been intimately connected historically and geographically with the struggle for the Rhine. They share in the Pact only as members of the League, but they enjoy no special protection if, in the day when war threatens, their membership of the League is not sufficiently such. Italy, however, a Mediterranean Power,

has signed the Pact because she is continentally involved by reason of her advance to the Brenner. As the treaty assures to Germany as well as to Belgium and France the help of the signatories if they are attacked without provocation, Italy is obliged as circumstances demand to fight France on the Var or Germany on the Alps. Thus to a great extent she is Britain's sword on the Continent. This support is assuredly welcome to Britain, for the British Empire as a whole is not pledged under the Pact, the Dominions in Article 9 being expressly given freedom to take independent decisions. This is, of course, of theoretical value only, for if Britain, acting in isolation, were involved in a life and death struggle, the Dominions are bound to come to her aid. In the Rhine Pact, in spite of her efforts to keep her daughter-states away from the danger zone of Europe, Britain at Locarno took a dangerous step which may end in changing the British Empire into a Commonwealth.

Czechoslovakia and Poland which not without reason hurried to the discussions and were welcomed by France in order to strengthen her own position, saw themselves shut out from the treaty and forced to content themselves with arbitration treaties, but these are part of the cabbalistic Pact system, as these states are bound to France by special treaties and their strengths are included in hers. Germany saw the danger and therefore refused the claim of France to the inclusion of a French guarantee in the treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia. France did not press the point. This was a success for German policy, but the success, too, was won by a policy fighting on the defensive.

All the arbitration treaties which Germany concluded with France, Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia contain in the first article a similarly worded stipulation that all juridical disputes will be submitted to an arbitration tribunal or to the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague, and in this limitation to juridical disputes take account of a German demand. Germany asked that great conflicts of interests should not be decided by the judgment of a court and maintained this position, but the resulting clause does not cover disputes which arise from circumstances existing before the agreement was signed. Here, too, Germany sees herself

before a barrier which prevents the arbitral settlement, or the re-opening, of any of the earlier disputes arising out of the Versailles treaty and its execution. But by Article 18 of the arbitration treaties the League Council retains its right under Article 15 of the Covenant to adjudicate on all cases where the parties to the dispute cannot agree. Thus here, too, the last word is left to Geneva and in the last resort the threat of armed execution is maintained.

In the preamble to the German-Polish and the German-Czechoslovak arbitration treaties, which have more the character of a judicial ordinance than a treaty, it is laid down that the signatories are agreed that the rights of a state can only be altered with its consent. That is a reinsurance for Poland and Czechoslovakia against any attempt to alter by peaceful means the German eastern frontiers in Germany's favour, unless the Poles or the Czechs think such an alteration to be in their own interests. The possibility of alteration under such circumstances is contained only in Article 19 of the Covenant where there is mysterious mention of obsolete treaties. But here intervenes the guarantee of the territorial *status quo* which the League as executive instrument of the Versailles treaty demands of all its members in Article 10. Here I may repeat a sentence that appears earlier in this book: "The ideal aim of the League to prevent war and to give wider scope to the conception of arbitration has been subordinated to the maintenance of the Versailles settlement."

Even the treaties of December 1, 1925, are bound by this iron law—"iron" because a war in which Germany and her allies were crushed gave it form; "law" because the stipulation has been expressed in a world statute, although at Versailles there was created a state of peace neither in Europe nor in the world and a mirage was created in place of a political reality.

Nevertheless, Europe greeted the conclusion of the Rhine Pact and the arbitration treaties as guarantees of peace. So great is the sense of insecurity, so unnerving the unrest, so terrible the intellectual distress and the economic collapse which have been the lot of humanity in the post-war period, that this treaty was greeted by European opinion with boundless confidence as the beginning of better days, despite the fact

that it was constructed on false premises and in spite of its significance is slow in effect.

Perhaps the final protocol of Locarno, signed by the six Powers, is right after all when it expresses the conviction that the entry into force of the Locarno treaties will lead to a moral *détente* among the nations and that they are enough to make easy the solution of many political and economic problems in a manner suitable to the interests and sentiments of the nations, to confirm peace and security in Europe and so really to accelerate the disarmament envisaged in the eighth article of the Covenant. But nothing at all is said of the imperialist policy based on the Versailles treaty and innumerable special treaties, and a reversal of it is not thought of.

If the Rhine Pact is considered a separate alliance and in a sense as an alliance against Russia, then Germany, which for the sake of security gave security, is doubly deceived. Everything, therefore, depends on how the Russian problem fits into the complex.

Germany on December 1, 1925, as a defenceless nation, resigned herself to enter the company of her foes, to escape from her isolation, and break the encirclement which was the strategic aim of the Versailles treaty, and she bought her freedom by renunciations, although the Preamble and Article 231 of the treaty maintain unjustly that Germany was guilty of causing the World War. Perhaps it is part of her tragic rôle, a rôle which now demands that she pursue the conflict for her rights, and the right to live of the German people within the League of Nations.

CHAPTER XX

GERMANY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

When Germany made the security problem the subject of her policy in order to prevent Britain and France from concluding a pact directed against her, the Powers concerned with reason went hastily to meet her and to offer her a treaty under the protection of the League of Nations. With the acceptance of that treaty Germany not only won a position within the pretentious treaty system which has been erected on the foundation of the Versailles treaty and the League Covenant, but also changed the viewpoint of her foreign policy. She has shifted her centre of gravity from the west to the east. The war for the Rhine is abandoned. The Germans on the Rhine trust to a truce of God and have given precedence to the struggle for the lost Lower Vistula and the lost portion of Upper Silesia. They know that they cannot fight this battle with the sword and that the Locarno treaties imposed renunciations also in the east, but there they do not stand before frontiers historically determined and constantly changed through a thousand years of warfare. This change of the political centre of gravity reminds one of the retirement of the Prussia of Frederick from the Rhine and its establishment on the Oder. But it has not the force of Frederick's action; it seems rather a manifestation of weakness.

If Germany were able to recover her sovereign position on the Rhine, the solution of the eastern frontier problem would require no special effort, for the Polish corridor, created by French strategy, and the loss of Upper Silesia, the result of an unjust decision of the League of Nations, depend on France's position of supremacy on the Rhine. This differentiation of Germany's political aims is possibly a political necessity, but it also conceals a danger. It allows this shifting of the centre of gravity, taken in connection with Germany's entry into the League, to seem a change of front which can be mistaken as directed against Russia. As the Germans cannot think of allowing themselves to join an anti-Russian front, they have

secured themselves against the recognition of Article 16 of the Covenant by demanding a declaration from the treaty Powers before they went to Locarno that Germany was freed from obligations under this article.

Britain and France tried to calm Germany's fears. They consented to a communication at Locarno which apparently satisfied Germany, and were followed by Italy, Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia. In this it was stated that the Powers were not competent to speak in the name of the League of Nations but that they did not hesitate to inform Germany of the interpretation which they themselves gave of Article 16. According to this interpretation, the obligations which were thereby imposed on the member-states were to be understood as binding each member to give loyal and active assistance to make the Covenant respected and to oppose any aggressive action, but only to the extent permitted by its military position and its geographical position. This document appeased Germany's fear but did not remove it and allowed the critical question to be posed : Does such a declaration offer Germany a real guarantee which recognises her vital needs, takes into consideration her geographical position and corresponds to her state of disarmament ? Of course not. Germany, the historic battlefield of Europe, the classic military highway, is not thereby protected from violation if Article 16 ever fails as a threat, and a League member or a state outside the League which geographically can involve Germany is involved in war or a League execution. It was not because of the Powers' conception of the document but because of the strategic grouping in which the League of Nations arose that Germany was not able to secure stronger guarantees.

As Article 16 of the Covenant implies the condemnation of all central states to subordination because of their geographical position, the central land of Europe is in the most dangerous position of all. Certainly the article is so far ambiguous in that its text does not demand actual participation in warlike operations from any of the member-states summoned to co-operate in the event of war, but speaks only of proposals which the Council may make, yet no state except privileged Switzerland can show a juridical warrant to prevent its territory being entered by a League army or to maintain its political

neutrality. The document which Germany received at Locarno certainly emphasises the relative nature of the assistance which would be asked of Germany as the land subjected to the strictest geographical constraint and most completely disarmed, and which could be met with a simple *non possumus*, but it does not protect Germany from the dangers involved. In possession of this declaration Germany can consider herself secured as against the League if she refuses to participate in an execution, but she cannot allege as against the state threatened with an execution this non-participation founded on her position of constraint and her military defencelessness. The Germans cannot take their country on their backs and carry it out of the danger zone in which it lies. Germany, the centre land of Europe, becomes a battlefield or a corridor whenever she is unable to halt the enemy at her frontiers. That is a fixed law.

The entry of Germany into the League creates new conditions which concern Germany as well as the League and leads, as far as one can judge, to new results. It brings the League nearer completion but, at the same time, it repels Russia from it. This repulsion is not determined by the entrance of Germany as a political Power, but by the fact that Germany has entered the League as a demilitarised military highway and a state which is deprived of sovereignty over a 50 kilometre zone on its western frontier. As the League can only fulfil its mission freely if it is a universal one, and if it is relieved of its task of acting as executive instrument of the imperialist Western Powers, a League crisis arises from this " retro-action " which to-day is clearly expressed by the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish alliance and the advocacy by Russia of the union of the Asiatic nations against the League. It can be resolved if a cathartic process is undergone. The League will first get rid of these difficulties when its relation to the grouping of the World War is seen as a chain. The adhesion of Germany, the hostility of Russia and the aloofness of the United States together raise again the problem of the universality of the League. The League idea to-day seems threatened by a triple division of the world which might result in the creation and mutual hostility of an American, an Asiatic and a European League.

German policy in the League is thus faced with overwhelmingly difficult tasks. As the League can only act as guarantor of peace and of the system set up by the peace treaty when the states that are predominant in it are convinced of the need for preserving peace in any particular case, Germany as a disarmed and burdened land in the League runs the risk of being involved in crises which only a truly sovereign, strongly armed state protected by separate alliances can overcome.

As a member of the League, Germany remains in the coils of encirclement. Only her entry into the League allows the enormity of the political blunder in its construction to be clearly seen, the blunder which is incarnated in the attitude adopted by the outlying Powers to the central states. The security and peace of Europe depend not on the maintenance, but on the demolition, of the wall of encirclement built round Germany, not on security pacts but on the restoration of sovereignty to the German people and the violated nations, and the much discussed universal disarmament is only able to serve the cause of peace when it arises naturally from a general state of peace.

Whoever cherishes the hope that the League which Wilson brought to Europe lest after his defeat in Paris he should bring back to America nothing but " the corpse of the Fourteen Points," will cease to be a League of the victors and become really a League of Nations, cannot blind himself to the fact that, after the refusal of America, the League actually, despite the adherence of China, Japan and numerous exotic small states, has become a European treaty-construction. He may recall the earlier League conceived for the earlier needs of French imperialism and for her security which St. Pierre in 1713 outlined, and that in greater measure than might be suspected from the edifice which the most brilliant jurists of the day have built upon it.

The project of St. Pierre never became an actuality, but all the world was once busy discussing it. Frederick the Great, Voltaire and Lessing poured scorn upon it. St. Pierre sought also to guarantee " security " to his own land when Louis XIV was compelled at Utrecht to retreat from the Rhine, and he gave the league of dynasts which he planned the task of

watching over the general peace by making it the arbiter of peace and threatening every ruler who refused to arbitrate with a holy war and expulsion from his realm.

War, intervention and execution were also provided for in the league of peace which grew up, on the soil of the Vienna Congress and under the shadow of the Holy Alliance, to be a Pentarchy and through the interpretation it received at Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laibach and Verona became the instrument of reaction in Europe. Sully's *Grand Dessin*, St. Pierre's project, the Holy Alliance, and Wilson's Covenant testify that at notable periods of history the pacifist idea makes progress. But the leagues of peace that have actually been formed also testify that these ably-constructed organisations with their elaborate international guarantees are perverted easily to become the tools of imperialism and may suppress war by establishing slavery.

It would lead us too far if we sought to examine the Rhine Pact, the arbitration treaties and the provisions of the endless series of League documents to discover whether after all many of their reservations may work in Germany's favour and whether the maintenance of peace in Europe is to-day more assured than a few years ago. The point is that in these treaties the insecure and incalculable conditions of to-day find tragic expression and that the curse of the World War still hangs over them all. No other war which altered the face of Europe ever found such a settlement. Never did the political sense of the victors so escape moral restraint as in ordering the new system one-sidedly in their favour. One parallel may be drawn.

When the Rhine Pact and the arbitration treaties were signed in London the representatives of the signatory Powers stood beneath the portrait of Castlereagh who, in Aix-la-Chapelle, had founded the peace of Europe on "the Five Power supremacy" of Britain, Austria, Russia, France and Prussia. The portrait had been expressly hung in the conference room to recall that peace alliance. But all comparison fails. Conquered France which was again received into favour at Aix-la-Chapelle, was never treated as a pariah; only Napoleon had borne the curse of the dynasties. Neither at the Vienna nor at the second Paris conference did France receive the extraordinary treatment which Germany received at

Versailles. Although she was not received at once into an alliance, yet Louis XVIII, as King by the Grace of God, on November 18, 1815, declared on his own responsibility his adhesion to the Holy Alliance as a league of ruling princes based on Christian principles. Although France was confined to the frontiers of 1790 yet German Alsace for which Britain had never fought was not taken from her. Although heavy indemnities were demanded from the French people yet they were soon fixed at 700,000,000 livres. Although Wellington occupied her northern provinces with Allied troops, yet the occupation was one of from three to five years only, and when France shortly afterwards struck a good bargain with Britain and raised a loan in London issued at 55 and paying 5 per cent. interest Britain thought no longer of harassing her debtor. At Aix-la-Chapelle France obtained the reduction of her war debt, the evacuation of Northern France, and the full restoration of her sovereignty. The founders of the Holy Alliance demanded no "security" from her and were content to re-erect the fortress barrier of the Netherlands before they withdrew their troops. Bourbon France at this price willingly recognised the reactionary principles of the policy of intervention which soon became the mark and *raison d'être* of the Pentarchy.

No one can say that the rôle which France assumed in 1818 can be played by Germany to-morrow and that the intervention policy of Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laibach and Verona can be renewed now by the League of Nations. When on May 2, 1821, the final protocol of the Laibach Congress was signed, the Pentarchy became a league which set before itself the task of securing the state system of Europe against alteration and of suppressing all liberal movements. The Pentarchy in this document took to itself the right "of crushing conspiracies and of putting an end to unrest in order to preserve universal peace whose re-establishment has cost so many efforts and so many victims." That recalls to us the words used at Versailles in 1919. Shortly after, as mandatory of the Pentarchy, France marched into Spain. She assumed again a military aspect, restored the conservative *régime* in Madrid and, in the process, secured a good part of the Spanish colonial trade. Then the unhappy Castlereagh, whose portrait

on December 1, 1925, was cleansed from the dust of a century, himself pronounced judgment on his policy. He saw himself assailed by the anger of the British commercial classes, and accused by Parliament of sacrificing British traditions, and in a moment of deep mental unsettlement committed suicide. Under Canning's leadership Britain returned to the policy of the " free hand."

If Germany is called to play a part by the League of Nations, it will certainly not be that of agent of a League execution which France played in 1821. Germany has secured herself against the obligations which, in Delphic language, are laid down in Article 16 of the Covenant and are capable of many interpretations. She can even cast doubts on the dreaded Article 10 for, while that certainly guarantees the territorial settlement and so guarantees to France, Belgium, Poland, Denmark and Czechoslovakia the possession of the spoils they have won from Germany in Europe and to Britain and France and Japan the possession of the spoils in Asia, Africa and the Pacific, yet it is questionable whether it brings into action the member-states if ever a great attack should result which divided the interests of the Western Powers. Who knows who would then go to war !

No single fundamental article of the un-European Covenant on which Wilson could only spare such time as was left over from his struggle with the Allies on European and Asiatic questions and its American consequences is assured against conflicting interpretations. This only is undoubted, that the strategic grouping of the World War again appears in the Covenant and that France seeks by the device of encirclement and by her separate alliances to keep Germany in a state of inferiority. And thus is raised the elementary question regarding the Western Pact and its associate treaties. Is this grouping no longer an active factor after Germany's entry and the system established by it falling to pieces ? If that is the case, then perhaps there is a possibility of freeing the League from the fetters placed upon it by the Versailles treaty, to make it truly universal and at the same time to establish a new Europe deceived by no mirage but one really at peace, in which Germany and the German people will again obtain their rights.

The new system imposed on Europe by the World War and the Versailles peace is not worth maintaining nor can it be guaranteed by force of arms, alliances and counter-alliances, security pacts and secret agreements. In the League Germany is a single disarmed Great Power among nations armed to the teeth. Consequently, an impulse has been given to the discussion of the disarmament problem. But it is impossible not to recognise that the disarmament problem is only part of the general problem, though a technically defined and extremely difficult part, presented by the world-crisis.

The complaints regarding the burden of armaments and the conviction that obedience to the Roman principle, *si vis pacem, para bellum*, provokes war, are as old as the longing after the establishment of a lasting state of peace on the part of the nations who have experienced a great war. When Louis XIV entered the War of the Spanish Succession 205,000 men stood under the French flags, and St. Pierre called that an intolerable figure. Actually in comparison to the armed forces which France maintains to-day in peace time it was a great figure, but it is not a question of the number of troops, if disarmament is to be based on a technical foundation, but on the establishment of a defined proportion between the armaments, the auxiliary weapons, the state of preparedness, the size and the geographical position of the respective states. Also alliances and possibilities of alliances should not be ignored, for they can fundamentally alter the proportion. A diminution of armaments, a limitation to definite figures and strengths is not sufficient always to cause a decline in war strength. That was shown clearly a few years ago.

When the Washington Conference fixed the naval strengths of the signatory Powers, the battle fleets were subjected to a fixed proportion in tonnage and gun-calibre, but the quality of the crews and of the material could not be normalised, and the agreement that light cruisers should be limited to 10,000 tons led to the rejection of 8,000-ton cruisers. The Conference thus led to an increase in cruiser strength. France, which was at the moment building a new squadron of five light cruisers of which three—*Duguay-Trouin*, *Primauguet* and *La Motte-Picquet*—were finished or practically so, at once ordered the increase of the remaining two—*Le Duquesne* and

Tourville—to 10,000 tons. The other Powers all followed suit. The normal type of light cruiser at the beginning of the World War was one of 4,000 tons—the *Emden* of glorious memory was only 3,650 tons; to-day it is of 10,000 tons, which, as we know, is exactly the tonnage which the Versailles treaty allowed Germany for her battle fleet which is reduced to six units while her cruisers may only be built up to 6,000 tons. Such signs shock one. A compulsory and supervised disarmament such as Germany has undergone is not the way to maintain world peace, but is a challenge to the Communist revolution which stands ready to fight for world dominion. Not the disarmament problem, but the problem of the restoration of a state of peace between the Powers brought into a state of equality will determine the future. If the League of Nations, which is conceived by the Great Powers as an instrument of power and by the small Powers as an instrument of law, is able to work in this direction, it will have a far greater chance of acting as peace-maker in the threatening future than if it confines itself to holding conference after conference, and as an instrument of execution and control carries out the decrees of the Great Powers as if they were juridical decisions.

But however that may be, the League of Nations is in its present form, which luckily is capable of alteration, the forum to which the European community turns with hope. It is organically connected with the mirage of Versailles, but neither its existence nor its development depends on the maintenance of that connection. Indeed, the more it frees itself from it, the more it is willing to amend and end the Treaty of Versailles, the source of all our ills, and especially to obliterate Article 231, the better will it fulfil its fundamental mission, which it expressed in the words: "To further the co-operation of the nations and to guarantee peace and security."

Historic renunciations have not seldom in history again been brought up for revision. The Locarno Pact is thus no permanent renunciation of historic ambitions, but only the creation of a *modus vivendi* for securing world peace for lack of which the whole world was falling into ruin, and the expression of the universal law *primum vivere*. If Britain, France and Germany meet on that assumption, then the treaty approximates to those many truces which the war for the Rhine has

produced during the centuries. Whether this war will be fought out again soon, or in the distant future, or in consequence of the gradual natural alteration of circumstances will be resumed with the use of peaceful methods, is doubtful. What part the League of Nations should play in the peaceful settlement of the problem, we should not presume to say. Only one thing is certain: the League must sever itself from its pre-Locarno history if it is to rise to the height of its true mission.

Germany entered the League not as a martyr but as master of her own fate. Had she not done so, then the society in which the stronger lord it, would neither have the power or the will to recover. Everything depends on the recovery of Germany. The issue of the crisis of Europe will be determined not so much by the law of the victors as by the fate of the vanquished. The progress of the world depends not on the inertia of the victors but on the power of the vanquished to recover.

The new order of Europe which resulted from the Great War was founded on the condemnation of Germany to impotence; it demanded her subjugation, since the continuation of the German Empire in political impotence was regarded as a vital condition of the maintenance of the political *status quo* which was created by the Treaty of Versailles. But the time has come to make an end of it, since history shows us that not Germany, but Europe *and* Germany, will be ruined in consequence of it and that the sentiment of solidarity cannot thrive if there is no equality in strength and no moral control of power. Only if this knowledge is able to influence events will that fate be banned which to-day no longer beckons with rosy fingers but casts a dread shadow on the curtain which veils the future from us.

The history of Europe will be determined by the defeat of the Treaty of Versailles and the spirit that rules it.

INDEX

NOTE: Only proper names are indexed, the subject matter being sufficiently indexed in the Table of Contents.

AACH, 56
AACHEN (Aix-la-Chapelle), 51, 56, 81, 138
AALAND Islands, 131–3, 137
AAR, R., 65, 72, 221
ABBASIDS, 267
ABD EL-KRIM, 242, 244, 325
ABDUL HAMID, 196, 212, 252
ABO, 131
ABOBA, 205
ABUKIR Bay, Battle of, 32
ABYSSINIA, 229
ADABAZAR, 264
ADALIA, 252
ADANA, 261, 263, 264, 269
ADIGE, 31, 74, 77, 221, 225, 231, 279
ADRIANOPLE, 174, 194, 197, 198, 207–9, 213, 214, 216–18, 255, 260, 261, 265, 274, 279, 283
ADRIATIC Sea, 74, 76, 85, 87, 166, 167, 169, 172, 189–92, 195, 196, 198–200, 202, 203, 205, 206, 215, 218, 219, 222–4, 226, 229, 232, 233, 235, 255, 282
AEGÆAN Sea, 197, 199, 204–6, 208, 215, 217, 224, 235, 245, 246, 249, 253, 258–260, 266, 279; islands (*v.* Dodekanese)
AFGHANISTAN, 281, 290, 291, 308, 309
AFIUN KARAHISSAR, 264
AFRICA, East, 306, 309
AFRICA, French, 37, 38, 42, 48, 49
AFRICA, South, 309
AFRICA, South-West, 306
AGADIR, 38
AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, Peace of, 237, 298, 306, 339, 340
AJDIR, 244
AKKERMAN, 188
ALARIC, 221, 222
ALBANIA, 190, 197, 198, 205–7, 218, 224, 233, 235, 246, 248, 249, 253
ALBRECHT of Brandenburg, 129
ALCAZAR, 240
ALEMANNIA, 222, 223
ALEPPO, 261, 267, 269–71
ALEXANDER CUZA of Roumania, 177
ALEXANDER the Great, 245, 260
ALEXANDER I of Russia, 93, 110, 113, 131, 135, 193, 208
ALEXANDER III of Russia, 211, 290
ALEXANDER NEVSKY, 130, 276
ALEXANDRETTA, 267, 270; gulf of, 260, 265–7
ALEXANDRIA, 308
ALEXINAC, 195, 260
ALFONSO VIII of Castile, 236
ALGECIRAS, Conference of, 179, 240
ALGERIA, 39
ALGIERS, 239
ALHUCEMAS, 241, 244
ALLENSTEIN, 124
ALPS, 27, 28, 39, 41, 42, 50, 63, 64, 87, 172, 205, 218–23, 226, 232, 332
ALSACE, 29, 33, 35, 36, 44, 50, 54, 138, 237, 296, 307
ALSEN, 143, 144
ALT, 282
ALTAI, 153, 204, 278
AMANUS, 269, 270
AMERICA *v.* United States of America
AMRUM, 146, 147
AMSTERDAM, 56
AMUR, 280, 286, 289, 290
ANNA ALDONA of Lithuania, 126
ANNA of Byzantium, 274
ANNA of Hungary, 90
ANNA of Russia, 126
ANATOLIA, 22, 48, 245, 255, 258, 259 261–7, 272, 308
ANDERNACH, 295
ANGORA, 259, 261, 263–5, 267, 269, 271, 272, 283; battle of, 23
ANNUNZIO, Gabriele d', 202
ANTIOCH, 270
ANTIVARI, 190, 192
ANTWERP, 42, 53–5, 59, 60
AOSTA, 221
APASI *v.* Michael Apasi
APENNINES, 81, 218–24 227, 228, 232, 235
APENRADE, 145–8
APULIA, 223
AQUAE SEXTIAE, 220
AQUITAINE, 22, 78, 222, 236
ARABIA, 260, 262, 263, 271, 304, 306, 308; Arabs in Spain, 235, 236
ARAD, 168, 169, 187
ARAGON, 237
ARCTIC Sea, 132
ARDAHAN, 264
ARDENNES, 28, 39, 42, 50, 51, 56, 159
AREZZO, 220, 221

ARGES, R., 183, 187, 282
ARIANISM, 236
ARIOVISTUS, 41, 220
ARLAU, R., 146
ARMENIA, 261–4, 267, 269, 278, 283
ARMENTIÈRES, 241
ARMINIUS, 85
ARNO R., 220
ARPAD, 151; House of, 87, 152, 153, 167
ARSIERO, 230
ARTA, 251
ARTOIS, 58
ARTWIN, 264
ASEN *v.* Ivan Asen
ASIA MINOR *v.* Anatolia
ASIAGO, 181, 230
ASPARUCH, 204
ASPERN, battle of, 93
ASTRAKHAN, 277
ASTURIA, 236
ATHENS, 245
ATLANTIC Ocean, 235, 237, 240, 241, 298, 309
ATLAS, 240, 260
ATTICA, 248
ATTILA, 151
AUERSTADT, 93
AUGEREAU, Marshal, 65
AUGUSTUS II of Poland, 105, 106
AUGUSTUS III of Poland, 106, 126
AUGUSTENBURG, 144
AURELIA, via, 219
AURELIAN emperor, 173, 180
AUSTERLITZ, battle of, 32, 92, 110, 194, 225
AUSTRALIA, 309, 313
AUSTRIA, 21–3, 25, 29–31, 34, 42, 51, 61, 64, 65, 71, 74–82, 85, 87, 90–6, 98–100, 104–11, 113, 114, 144, 145, 151, 156–66, 169, 176–84, 191–3, 195, 196, 198–200, 202, 203, 207, 210–12, 218, 223, 225–30, 237, 238, 241, 261, 278–82, 298, 305, 316, 339
AUSTRIAN Succession, War of the, 30, 91, 92, 164, 226, 297, 298
AVARS, 189
AZOV, 107, 135, 285; sea of, 279

BABYLON, 267
BADEN, 323
BAGDAD, 267, 271, 281, 309
BAIKAL Lake, 287, 291
BAJAZET I of Turkey, 23, 191
BAKU, 135, 278, 290, 308
BÂLE, 38, 65, 71–3, 259; treaty of, 238
BALEARIC Islands, 235
BALKANS, 77, 78, 91, 107, 154, 171–4, 187, 189, 190, 193, 196, 204–7, 218, 229, 247, 259–61, 269, 274, 279–82, 303
BALKAN Wars, 179, 180, 197–9, 211–13, 282
BALKH, 290
BALTIC, 85–7, 99, 102–4, 107, 108, 110, 115, 122, 124, 125, 127–35, 137, 139, 140, 142, 145–50, 248, 273, 278, 286, 287
BANAT, 154, 164, 167, 171, 182, 184, 186, 202
BAR, Duchy of, 106
BAR (Poland), 279; confederation of, 107, 247
BASIL II of Byzantium, 206, 274
BASQUES, 236
BASSARAB, 174, 181, 186
BASTA, George, 175
BATORY, Andreas, 175
BATORY, Stephan, 102, 123, 157, 160
BATSCHKA, 202
BATU KHAN, 153, 275
BATUM, 264, 280, 290
BAUTZEN, battle of, 93
BAVARIA, 38, 79, 83, 86, 87, 92–4, 163, 221, 230, 231
BEACHY HEAD, battle off, 295
BEACONSFIELD, Earl of, 250
BELA IV of Hungary, 152
BELED-SINJAR, 267
BELESCH, 216
BELFORT, 66, 71
BELGIUM, 24, 25, 31, 32, 41, 42, 49, 51–61, 138, 148, 297, 301, 305–7, 311, 314, 316, 317, 323, 326–8, 331, 332, 336, 341
BELGRADE, 75, 107, 155–7, 171, 172, 174, 191–5, 201, 215, 247, 260, 261; peace of, 193
BELLUNO, 225
BELT, The, 139, 148, 149
BENDER, 105, 135, 175
BERAUN, R., 83
BERBERS, 240, 241
BERGELL, 231
BERGEN OP ZOOM, 56
BERLIN, 81, 118; congress of, 178, 195, 209, 250, 280, 287, 290
BERN, 64, 66
BERNADOTTE, 137
BERNHARD of Weimar, 29
BESANÇON, 66
BESKID mountains, 84
BESSARABIA, 78, 171, 174–8, 183, 184, 186–8, 208, 248, 279, 280, 282, 284
BETHLEN GABOR, 91, 157, 159, 160
BIREDJIK, 267
BIRON, Duke of Courland, 126, 130
BIRON, Peter, 126, 130
BIRS, R., 64
BISMARK, 22, 63, 81, 137, 144, 145, 179, 200, 228, 233, 250, 280, 290, 303

Bizerta, 38
Black Forest, 39, 41, 50, 64, 72, 77, 92, 221
Black Sea, 22, 99, 104, 133, 154, 171, 173, 174, 186, 204, 205, 209, 216, 217, 218, 224, 245, 247, 248, 259, 264–7, 273, 274, 279, 285, 287, 288, 291
Blanc, Mt., 39
Blücher, 65, 94
Bocskay, Stephan, 157, 160
Boeotia, 246
Boerebistas, 172
Bogumil Heresy, 205
Bohemia (*v.* also Czechoslovakia), 42, 76, 77, 83–96, 98, 100, 121, 138, 151, 159, 161, 166, 230, 237
Böhmerwald, 77, 86, 93, 189
Boleslav I of Poland, 100
Boleslav I of Bohemia, 100
Boleslav II of Bohemia, 86
Boleslav III of Bohemia, 86, 87
Bolshevism, 277, 284–92
Boris Gudonov, 277
Boris II of Bulgaria, 274
Bornhöved, battle of, 140
Bosdagh, 216
Bosnia, 153–5, 192, 195, 196, 199, 209, 212, 252, 279–82
Bosporus, 13, 34, 107, 159, 172–4, 186, 201, 207, 216, 217, 225, 247, 259–61, 269, 279, 280, 281
Bothnia, Gulf of, 122, 133
Bourbon, House of, 32, 33, 38, 111, 226, 228, 239, 299
Boyne, battle of the, 295
Bozen, 76
Braila, 183, 187
Brandenburg, 89, 103, 104, 108, 128, 129, 134
Brankovitch *v.* George Brankovitch
Bratiano, Ion, 181, 182
Bregenz, 72
Breisach, 29, 50
Brenner, 71, 76, 77, 80, 135, 138, 218, 221, 226, 230–2, 235, 332
Brenta, R., 221
Brest, 38
Brest Litovsk, peace of, 126, 284, 285
Breusch, R., 39
Briand, Aristide, 312, 320
Britain, 17, 21–5, 30–2, 34, 37, 42–9, 51–6, 59–62, 66, 92, 96, 105, 107, 108, 111, 113–6, 118, 124, 127, 133, 137–9, 143–7, 149, 159, 179, 197, 198, 201, 224, 229, 232, 233, 235, 237–42, 244, 247–51, 253–5, 258, 261–7, 269–72, 279–83, 288–90, 292–315, 318–26, 330–2, 335, 336, 340, 341, 343
Bromberg, 110
Brugg, 71
Bruneck, 76
Brunn, 84
Brusa, 259, 265
Brussels, 54, 55
Brzezany, 283
Bucharest, 75, 183, 187, 282; peace of (1886), 210; peace of (1913), 180, 199, 254, 256; peace of (1918), 184
Budapest, 78, 90, 97, 153, 156, 157, 162, 165, 167, 171, 181, 184
Budeweis, 83
Budua, 192
Buftea, peace of, 183
Bug, R., 74, 99, 102, 113, 115, 130, 281, 283
Bugey, 158
Bukhara, 290
Bukovina, 109, 171, 173, 282
Bulgaria (Bulgars), 23, 25, 78, 153, 173, 176, 178–82, 184, 187, 190, 193–207, 218, 246, 249, 251–6, 258, 269, 274, 275, 282, 283, 290
Bund, 74
Burgenland, 76, 168
Burgundy, 22, 39, 64, 223
Buxen, 76
Byzantium (*v.* also Constantinople), 139, 151, 152, 172, 173, 190, 191, 204–7, 222–4, 232, 246, 254, 255, 259, 260, 267, 273, 274, 277

Cadiz, 236, 239, 298
Caesar, Julius, 28, 41, 50, 220, 221, 223, 232, 237, 260
Calabria, 222, 223, 245
Calais, 51
Caliphate, 265, 270, 272
Calmar, Union of, 141
Cambon, Paul, 305
Cameroon, 37
Campania, 222, 223
Campina, 188
Campo Formio, treaty of, 225
Canada, 22, 107, 299, 309, 314
Canary Islands, 241
Canning, 341
Canute, 139
Capet, House of, 28
Carelia, 131
Carinthia, 76, 202, 203
Carlowitz, peace of, 225
Carniola, 77
Carol I of Roumania, 178, 179, 181
Carolingians, 27, 28, 58, 74, 81, 86, 205, 232
Carpathian mountains, 32, 83, 84, 89, 111, 113, 151–3, 156, 165, 167–9, 171–6, 178, 180, 181, 187, 194, 273, 283

Carthage, 219, 220, 229, 235, 236, 240
Casablanca, 240, 241
Casimir III of Poland, 101, 126, 128
Casimir IV of Poland, 89, 101
Caspian Sea, 23, 289
Castile, 236, 237
Castlereagh, 302, 303, 305, 339, 240, 341
Catalonia, 28, 236
Cateau Cambrésis, treaty of, 223
Catherine II of Russia, 107–9, 130, 177, 208, 247, 248, 279, 287
Cattaro, 190, 195
Caucasus, 260, 261, 283, 306
Cavour, 228
Cecil, William, 293
Celtiberians, 235
Celts, 173, 219, 221, 235, 246
Cernavoda, 183
Ceuta, 240, 244
Champagne, 230, 282
Channel, English, 28, 38, 39, 297, 298, 300, 301
Charlemagne 27, 74, 81, 86, 138, 232, 236
Charleroi, 54
Charles Emanuel of Savoy, 158, 227
Charles Martel, 23, 236
Charles IX of France, 102
Charles X of France, 32
Charles IV of Bohemia, and Emperor, 88, 101
Charles V, Emperor, 29, 154, 157, 159, 225, 237
Charles IV of Austria, 114
Charles IX of Sweden, 103
Charles X of Sweden, 103, 134, 135, 160
Charles XII of Sweden, 105, 106, 125, 135, 163
Charles Robert of Hungary, 153, 174
Charles the Bold of Burgundy, 64
Charles, Archduke, 93
Charles, Duke of Anjou, 259
Cherson, 274
China, 289–91, 308–11, 325, 338
Chios, 253
Chita, 291
Chlodwig, 232
Choiseul, 299
Chorik, 266
Chotin, 107, 175, 188
Christian, Bishop of Oliva, 128
Christian IV of Denmark, 141
Christian of Brunswick, 159
Church, States of the, 228, 229
Cilicia, 262–6
Cilli, 76
Cimbri, 220
Cisalpine Gaul, 219
Clausewitz, 73
Clemenceau, Georges, 45, 46
Cologne, 29, 50, 51, 56, 298, 310, 321 331
Compiègne, 96
Condé, 58
Congo, 52, 57, 241
Conrad II, Emperor, 139, 140
Conrad of Masovia, 128
Constance, Lake, 64, 71, 223
Constantine of Greece, 264, 265
Constantine (Algeria), 239
Constantinople, 22, 154, 174, 177–9, 186, 206, 210, 213, 218, 245, 248, 249, 254, 256, 258–60, 263, 265–7, 273, 276, 279–81, 283, 286, 289, 306, 308
Constanza, 183, 187
Conti, Count, 105, 106, 163
Copenhagen, 140, 142, 143, 150
Corfu, 225, 233, 255, 256
Corsica, 227, 228, 233
Corvinus (*v.* Matthias C.)
Cossacks, 102, 277, 279, 285
Cracow, 99, 101, 109–11
Craiova, 282
Cremona, 219, 222
Crete, 196, 211, 245, 248, 250, 252, 253
Crimea, 103, 193, 274, 277, 279, 285
Crimean War, 165, 177, 228, 250, 279, 287, 290, 302
Croatia, Croats, 153, 154, 156, 160, 164, 166, 167, 174, 189, 190, 193, 199, 202–4 226
Cromwell, Oliver, 294
Cuba, 239
Cujavia, 275
Culpa, R., 77
Cumans, 152
Custozza, battle of, 228
Cuza *v.* Alexander Cuza
Cyprus, 38, 245, 258, 271, 280, 303
Czechoslovakia, Czechs (*v.* also Bohemia), 24, 25, 35, 48, 49, 75, 76, 78–80, 82–98, 112, 116, 126, 138, 158, 159, 166, 168, 170, 203, 283, 289, 314, 319, 324, 326, 332, 333, 341
Czechs, Young, 95
Czernowitz, 187, 188

Dacia, 77, 172–4, 176, 180, 184
Dagö Island, 135, 140, 149
Dalmatia, 153, 154, 161, 166, 189–91, 198, 199, 202, 218, 222, 224, 225, 232
Damascus, 261, 270, 271
Daniel of Halicz, 275
Danube, 27, 31, 62, 74–82, 84–7, 89–93, 152–6, 161, 162, 165–9, 171–8, 180–3, 186, 188–90, 192, 194, 195, 198, 203–6, 209, 210, 215, 218, 221, 224, 231, 260, 271, 274, 279
Danzig, 100, 108–10, 115, 122–4, 138, 150

Dardanelles, 22, 34, 166, 191, 200, 201, 210, 216, 218, 248, 251, 253, 255, 258, 260–2, 265, 266, 279
Darius of Persia, 260
Dawes Plan, 313, 314, 322, 330
Deane, Silas, 299
Debreczin, 183
Decebalus, 77, 172–6, 186
Dedeagatch, 213, 218, 263, 279
Delhi, 271
Delphi, 20, 245
Denmark, Danes, 25, 105, 122, 125, 134, 137–50, 278, 299, 341
Diala, 269
Diarbekir, 263, 269
Diebitsch, 208
Diesnel, R., 41
Dinaric Alps, 202, 205, 224, 230
Dirschau, 124
Distelmayer, Lampert, 129
Dmitri IV of Moscow, 276
Dmitri, false, of Russia, 103, 277
Dnieper R., 85, 101, 102, 104, 108, 118, 126, 151, 174, 248, 260, 273–5, 277, 278, 285, 287
Dniester, R., 101, 104, 106, 151, 153, 172, 183, 184, 186, 187, 193, 204, 206, 278, 279, 283, 287
Dobricland, 204
Dobrudja, 171–4, 178–80, 182–4, 186, 187, 204–6, 214, 215, 217, 280, 282
Dodekanese, 197, 229, 233
Doiran, 215, 218
Dolomites, 76
Domitian, Emperor, 172
Don, R., 132, 275, 278
Dora Baltea, R., 42, 74
Dorians, 245
Dorna Vatra, 188
Dorpat, 130; peace of, 132
Dover, 310
Drake, Francis, 294
Drama, 216, 218
Drave, R., 151, 153, 161, 168, 189, 199, 202, 203, 221, 226, 231
Dresden, 94
Driesen, 129
Drin, R., 211
Drogden, 149
Druses, 270
Drusus, 221, 231, 232
Dubissa, R., 128
Duisburg, 36, 325
Dulcigno, 190
Dunajec, R., 99, 108
Dunkirk, 54, 297
Dupleix, 298
Düppel, battle of, 137, 144
Durazzo, 190, 198, 218
Düren, 320
Durlach, 295
Düsseldorf, 36, 56, 325
Dvina, 104, 108, 109, 118, 127, 131, 132, 283
Dzesireh Ibn Omar, 265–7, 269, 271

Ebert, Friedrich, 323
Ebro, R., 236, 237
Edward VII of Britain, 137, 179, 303, 304
Eger (river), 83, 120
Eger (town, 83–5, 91
Egypt, 37, 38, 182, 208
Eider, R., 138, 143, 145
Elassona, 253
Elee, 30–2, 42, 83–6, 89, 93, 94, 110, 139, 140, 142, 144, 146, 226, 237, 260, 322
Elizabeth of England, 293, 294
Elizabeth of Russia, 22, 279, 287
Elsgau, 71
Emmerich, 56
Empire, Holy Roman, 28, 29, 30, 62–4, 81, 85–9, 100, 138, 139, 140, 151, 152, 158, 224, 225, 232, 235, 237, 296, 297, 329
Empire, Latin, of the East, 152
Ems, 58
Engadine, 71, 72
England (*v.* Britain)
English Channel, *v.* Channel
Enns, 76
Enos, 218
Epirus, 190, 199, 207, 224, 246, 248–51, 253
Eresos, 245
Erft, R., 56
Eric, St., of Sweden, 131
Eric XIII of Pomerania, 141
Erivan, 267
Ermeland, 102, 108
Erz mountains, 83, 84, 93
Erzerum, 262, 283
Eskishehr, 264
Essling, battle of, 83
Esthonia, 25, 103–5, 122, 125, 127, 130, 132, 133, 135, 140
Etruria, Etruscans, 218, 219, 220, 222
Eugène of Savoy, 75, 163, 191–3, 196, 207, 225, 226, 279, 281
Eupen, 51, 54, 57, 330
Euphrates, 27
Eurasia, 50, 116, 133, 284, 290, 292
Eylau, battle of, 287

Far East, Republic of the, 289
Faroe Islands, 139
Fascism, 233
Ferdinand I of Austria, 90, 156, 157
Ferdinand II of Austria, 90
Ferdinand of Aragon, 237

Ferdinand, of Bulgaria, 211, 213
Fernando Po, 241
Fez, 240, 241, 242
Fichtel mountains, 83
Fiesole, 220
Finland, Finns, 25, 122, 125, 127, 131, 132, 134, 135, 139, 275, 285
Finland, Gulf of, 131, 132
Fiume, 167, 202, 203
Flaminia Via, 219
Flanders, 22, 28, 30, 52, 53, 55, 56, 163, 238, 241, 292
Flensburg, 122, 138, 143, 146–9
Fleurus, battle of, 51
Florida, 299
Florina, 215
Foch, Ferdinand, 44, 320
Focsani, 183, 188, 215, 282
Föhr, 146, 147
Forth, R., 293
France, 17, 22, 24–58, 60–7, 67, 71–3, 77–9, 82, 84, 91, 93–8, 100, 102–8, 110, 111, 113–6, 118–20, 123, 124, 127, 133, 137, 138, 142–4, 146, 150, 151, 154–9, 161–4, 166, 169, 179, 186, 189, 192, 197–201, 203, 208, 211, 212, 220, 222–8, 231, 233, 235, 237–42, 244, 247–51, 253–6, 259–67, 269–71, 278–83, 287–9, 294–343
Franche Comté, 29, 64, 65, 159, 237
Francis Joseph of Austria, 114, 165, 179, 196
Francis Rakoczy II, 162, 163, 165, 166
Francois I of Nance, 102, 154
Franconia, 83, 84, 91
Frankfurt, 80, 95, 199; peace of, 33
Frankfurt on the Oder, 118
Franks, 23, 27, 85, 86, 205, 223, 236
Franz Ferdinand, Archduke, 199, 200, 282
Frederick II, Emperor, 140, 224
Frederick III, Emperor, 155
Frederick II of Brandenburg, 89
Frederick II, the Great, of Prussia, 21, 30, 31, 50, 92, 93, 106–8, 110–12, 129, 153, 298, 299, 335, 338
Frederick, Elector, of Bohemia, 91, 159
Frederick of Augustenburg, 144
Frederick William of Kurland, 126
Frederick William II of Prussia, 109
French Revolution, 31, 41, 43, 51, 109, 142, 164, 193, 227, 301
Friedland, battle of, 287
Frisians, 140, 143, 146, 148
Friuli, 222, 223
Fumay, 60
Fünfkirchen, 168
Furlo Pass, 219

Gabor *v.* Bethlen, Gabor
Galatz, 77, 78, 187, 188, 282
Galicia (Poland), 86, 100, 108, 111, 112, 131, 161, 173, 275, 282
Galicia (Spain), 236
Gallipoli, 211, 218, 255, 256, 263, 266
Garonne, 23, 43, 223
Gaul, 23, 219, 221, 232
Geiseric, 235
Gendimin of Lithuania, 126, 127, 128
Geneva, 64, 158, 159; lake of, 27, 41, 69
Geneva Protocol, 319–21, 328
Genghis Khan, 23, 153, 275, 290, 291
Genoa, 224, 227, 322
George Brankovitch, 192
George, D. Lloyd, 43, 45, 46, 264, 265, 272
George I of Greece, 250
George of Podiebrad, 89, 102, 155
George Rakoczy I, 159, 161
George Rakoczy II, 162
Georgios, Patriarch, 249
Germany, 16, 23–6, 28–37, 41–57, 60–8, 71, 72, 74, 76–89, 91–105, 113–16, 118–20, 122–9, 131, 133, 134, 137–52, 156, 160, 162, 163, 165, 166, 169, 178, 180, 181, 183, 187, 197, 200, 201, 204, 211, 212, 222, 223, 229–32, 235, 237–41, 246, 250, 251, 253, 261, 273, 276, 278, 279, 281–5, 287, 288, 295, 297, 298, 300, 302–8, 311, 313–44
Getae, 172, 173, 176, 181, 184
Gette, R., 53, 54
Gevgeli, 216
Gex, 69, 158
Gibraltar, 224, 235, 236, 238, 242, 244, 297, 299, 309
Givet, 54, 58
Glatt, 72
Glurns, 76
Gniesen, 100
Gobi, 291
Golden Horde, 23, 275, 277, 285
Good Hope, Cape of, 294
Gorm of Denmark, 138
Görz (Gorizia), 76, 202
Gothland, 141
Goths, 78, 173, 189, 221–3, 236
Gottorp, 141 146
Granson, battle of, 64
Greece, 24, 25, 177, 179, 196–9, 204, 207, 209, 210, 218, 229, 233, 245–60, 262–5, 269, 274, 283
Gregory VII, Pope, 190
Gregory IX, Pope, 153
Grey, Sir E., 305
Grossgörschen, battle of, 93
Grosswardein, 161, 168, 169
Guadalquivir, R., 235, 236, 239
Gudonov *v.* Boris Gudonov

Guinea, 125
Gustavus, Adolphus, of Sweden, 29, 103, 125, 134, 159

Habsburg, House of, 29, 54, 64, 74, 75, 78, 80, 87, 90, 102, 113, 157–9, 161–6, 182, 224, 238
Hadersleben, 146
Hakkiari, 269
Halicz, 101, 275, 283
Hamburg, 141, 226
Hamilkar Barka, 219
Hannibal, 219, 220, 235
Hanover, 21, 297, 298
Hansa, 122, 125, 128, 140, 141, 277
Harald, Bluetooth, 138
Hardt, 55
Hatzeg, R., 172, 188
Havel, 139
Hedwig of Poland, 101
Hegau, 39, 64, 71, 72, 221
Hela, Cape, 122
Heligoland, 142, 146, 147
Hellenes, 246
Hellespont (*v.* Bosporus), 207
Helsingfors, 131
Henri of Poland, or III of France, 102, 105
Henry I, Emperor, 138
Henry II, Emperor, 87
Henry IV of France, 23, 29, 158, 159
Henry of Brunswick, 139
Henry of Plauen, 129
Hercules, Pillars of, 27, 236
Héricourt, 64
Hermannstadt, 175
Herzegovina, 195, 212, 252, 282
Hindenburg, President von, 323
Hoche, General, 36
Höchstädt, battle of, 75, 296
Hohenstaufen, House of, 87, 140, 259
Hohenzollern, House of, 129, 139
Holland, 23, 30, 31, 37, 41, 50, 51, 56, 58–63, 92, 105, 134, 158, 159, 237, 294, 296, 297, 299, 301, 311, 331
Holstein, 134, 140, 142–5
Holy Alliance, 94, 239, 302, 339, 340
Hongkong, 309
Honorius, Emperor, 78, 221
Horthy, Admiral, 167
Hudson Bay, 298
Hultschin, 96
Hungary, 25, 74, 75, 78, 83, 84, 86, 88–90, 96, 99–101, 108, 133, 151–70, 173–6, 179, 184, 188–93, 196, 202, 203, 207, 216, 218, 224, 227, 230, 275
Huns, 189, 204
Hunyadi, John, 154, 192
Huss, Hussites, 88–91, 96, 97, 126

Ibar, R., 190–3
Iberia (*v.* Spain), 235, 236, 238
Iceland, 139
Iconium (*v.* Konia), 259
Ifni, 240, 241
Iglau, 83, 84, 87
Iller, R., 27, 41, 92, 322
Illyria, 198, 221, 226, 260
Ilmen, Lake, 276
Imbros, 253, 266
India, 280, 291, 294, 298, 300, 306, 308, 309; Indian Mutiny, 302
Indies, East, 59, 62, 294
Indies, West, 294
Ingermanland, 102, 130, 135
Iniuda, 218
Inn, 42, 65, 74, 92, 93, 221, 226, 232
Innsbrück, 226
Ionia, 245, 253, 255, 262, 265
Ionian Islands, 250
Irak (*v.* Mesopotamia), 261, 266, 269, 270, 308, 325
Ireland, 139, 295, 296, 300
Irkutsk, 291
Irtish, R., 291
Isabella of Spain, 237
Ismid, 265
Ismilan, 218
Isonzo, R., 166, 225, 230
Istria, 80, 81, 166, 202, 203, 227, 228, 230
Ivan Asen II of Bulgaria, 206
Ivan I of Russia, 276
Ivan II of Russia, 277
Ivan III of Russia 138, 277
Ivan IV of Russia, 102, 277, 285
Italy, 17, 22, 24, 25, 37, 41, 42, 49, 57, 63, 67, 71, 74–8, 81, 94, 116, 138, 139, 151, 159, 165, 177, 184, 196, 199, 201–3, 218–35, 237, 239, 244, 253, 255, 256, 258, 262, 263, 305, 311, 312, 314, 326, 331, 332, 336

Jablonika mountains, 99
Jagello, 101, 113, 119, 129, 175
Jagst, R., 322
Janina, 251, 253
Japan, 17, 25, 59, 62, 280, 288, 289, 304, 310, 311–13, 338, 341
Jassy, 187, 188; peace of, 248
Jasyges, 152
Javorinka mountains, 163
Jekaterinoslav, 279
Jena, battle of, 32, 93
Jerebilis, 269
Joachim of Brandenburg, 129
Johannisburg, 124
John Casimir of Poland, 103, 104, 108
John Sobieski of Poland *v.* Sobreski
John Zimisces *v.* Zimisces
John, Don, of Austria, 225

Juana of Castile, 237
Jubaland, 264
Jugoslavia (*v.* Serbia), 35, 75–8, 80, 81, 97, 131, 166, 168, 169, 170, 189–204, 218, 226, 253, 260
Julian Alps, 189, 230, 232
Jura, 39, 41, 64–6, 71
Justinian, Emperor, 222
Jutland, 27, 134, 137–46, 148
Jutland, battle of, 147, 149

Kabul, 286
Kabyle, 240, 241, 244
Kadjars, 308
Kai Kobad, 259
Kalisch, 110, 118
Kamar, 274
Karawanken mountains, 77, 86
Karolyi, Alexander, 163
Karolyi, Michael, 166
Kars, 264, 280
Kasvin, 308
Kattegat, 138, 139, 149
Katzbach, 94
Kaunitz, 21
Kavalla, 213, 253, 256
Kazan, 276, 277
Kemal, Pasha, 37, 261, 267, 270
Kerkuk, 267
Kettler, Gottfried, 125, 126, 130
Kettler, Jacob, 125
Khazars, 274
Khiva, 290
Khorasmia, 283, 290
Khurshid, Pasha, 194
Khyber Pass, 308
Kiauchau, 314
Kiel, 141, 144, 146, 148
Kiev, 101, 273–6, 285
Kinzig, R., 301
Kipchaks, 275
Kirghiz, 290
Kirk Kilisse, battle of, 197
Klagenfurt, 77
Klausenburg, 160, 183
Kliasma, R., 276, 278
Koblenz, 55
Kola Peninsula, 132
Kolin, battle of, 92
Komorn, 168, 169
Konia, 259, 261, 265, 269
Königgrätz, battle of, 94, 137, 145, 165, 228
Königsau, 138
Korea, 289
Korybut, 126
Kosciusko, 109
Kossovo, 154, 195, 211, 215, 260; first battle of, 154, 191; second battle of, 154, 192
Kossuth, 164, 165
Kragujevac, 192, 194
Kremlin, 103, 112
Krems, 84
Kronstadt (Russia), 132
Kronstadt (Transylvania), 183
Krum, 204
Krusevac, 191, 195
Kuban, 279
Kulikovo, R., battle of the, 276
Kulm, 101, 108
Kulturkampf, 112
Kumanovo, 199
Kurdistan, 261–4, 267, 269, 272
Kurisches Haff, 32, 126
Kurland, 125, 128, 130
Kutchuk Kainardji, treaty of, 177, 248
Kut el Amara, 309
Kuttenberg, 87
Kutzo-Vlachs, 180

Laconia, 248
Ladoga Lake, 131, 132, 273
Lahn, R., 39
Lahnstein, 65
La Hogue, Cape, 296
Laibach, 76, 225, 226, 232; congress of, 239, 339, 340
Landau, 320
Landskron, 84
Langres, 66, 67
Larache, 240, 241, 244
Larg, R., 66
Larissa, 251, 252
Latin Empire of the East, 259
Latvia, Letts, 25, 122, 125, 127, 130, 132, 133
Lauenburg, 139, 142, 143, 145
Lausanne, 66; conference and treaty of, 268, 270, 271
Lazar, 191
Lazarevitch, 192
League of Nations; *v.* Nations, League of
Lebanon, 270, 325
Lechfeld, battle of the, 151, 152
Leck, 146
Leckau, 146, 148
Leibnitz, 106
Leipzig, 91, 94; battle of 32, 65, 94
Leitha, R., 75
Leitmeritz, 83
Lemnos, 253
Lenin, N., 286, 292
Leo III, Emperor, 246
Leoben, peace of, 227
Leopold of Austria, 161, 162
Leopold of Belgium, 52
Lepanto, battle of, 225
Lesbos, 245, 253

Lescovac, 195
Lessing, 338
Leszczynski, Stanislas, 105, 106, 123
Leuthen, battle of, 92, 110
Libau, 130, 135
Liechtenstein, 74
Liège, 38, 51, 53, 56, 58, 302
Liguria, 220, 223, 227, 228
Lille, 30, 51, 241
Lim, 190
Limat, 72
Limburg, 51, 59, 60
Limes, the, 77, 79
Limfjord, 138, 145
Linz, 78
Lippe, 41, 77
Lissa, battle of, 228
Lithuania, 25, 88, 89, 99, 101, 109, 115, 116, 122–9, 133, 135, 275, 286
Livonia 102–4, 125, 128, 130, 135, 277
Locarno, Pact of, 49, 50, 266, 292, 308, 314, 326–9
Lodemiria, 108
Lombards, Lombardy, 28, 64, 71, 223–8, 238
Lomellina, 227
Lomza, 110
London Conference of, *v.* Locarno, 322, 325, 330
Lorraine, 29, 33, 35, 39, 44, 50, 53–5, 106, 307, 327
Lötzen, 124
Louis IX of France, 38
Louis XI of France, 64
Louis XIV of France, 30, 32, 37, 44, 46, 50–2, 56, 62, 91, 104, 162–4, 238, 239, 295, 296, 329, 342
Louis XVI of France, 301
Louis XVIII of France, 340
Louis Philippe of France, 32
Louis I of Hungary, 101, 154
Louis II of Hungary, 90, 155
Louis the Pious, 205
Louisiana, 299
Louvain, 54
Louvois, 295
Lübeck, 140
Lublin, 110
Lule Burgas, 197, 212
Lunéville, peace of, 51, 227
Lusatia, 84, 87, 89
Lutsk, 181
Luxemburg, 53, 63; House of, 88
Lyck, 124
Lyons, 38, 42, 65, 158
Lys, R., 60

Maastricht, 51, 53, 56, 298
Macdonald, Marshal, 226
Macedonia, 189–91, 194, 197–9, 202, 203, 205, 216, 218, 235, 245, 246, 248, 251–6, 260
Maciejowice, battle of, 109
Mackensen, General von, 215
Madrid, 239, 340
Magdeburg, 100, 226
Magellan, Straits of, 294
Magenta, battle of, 177, 228
Magyars *v.* Hungary
Main, R., 31, 39, 55, 65, 226
Mainz, 42, 55, 72
Malatia, 269
Malaya, 313
Malines, 51, 54
Malmédy, 51, 54, 56, 57, 330
Malplaquet, 75, 297
Malta, 228, 233
Manchuria, 280, 310
Mannheim, 65
Mansfeld, Count, 91, 159
Marata-halebli, 261
Marbod, 85, 90
Marburg, 76, 203
March, R., 43, 83–6, 93, 152
Marchfeld, 74, 76, 84
Marcomanni, 85
Mardin, 267
Marengo, battle of, 31, 51, 64, 69, 227
Margaret of Denmark, 141
Maria Teresa of Austria, 22, 75, 92, 167
Marienburg, 124, 129
Marienwerder, 124
Marignano, battle of, 64, 225
Maritime Alps, 28, 39, 41, 219, 220, 222
Maritza, R., 199, 207, 211, 212, 214, 216, 218, 246, 253–5, 260, 265, 266, 269
Marmara, Sea of, 74, 213, 218, 260, 263–5
Marmaros, 174, 175, 181, 184
Marmaros Sziget, 84
Marne, R., 35, 54, 65, 230
Maros, R., 162, 172, 184, 186, 189
Marseilles, 38, 42
Martinsbruck, 71, 72
Marx, 284
Masovia, 101, 109, 128
Masséna, Marshal, 72
Masurian, Lakes, 126
Matapan, C., 245
Matthias Corvinus, 89, 102, 155, 156, 170
Matthias, Palatine of Hungary, 161
Maubeuge, 54
Mauretania, 256
Maximilian I, Emperor, 64, 160, 237
Maximilian II, Emperor, 160
Mazarin, 103, 329
Mecca, 271
Mecklenburg, 139, 140
Medina, 271

Mediterranean Sea, 27, 28, 37, 38, 42, 77, 80, 81, 134, 186, 189, 190, 195, 197, 219, 220, 226, 229, 231–3, 235–8, 240, 241, 245, 273, 274, 281, 283, 286, 296, 297, 300, 304, 305, 331
Melilla, 240, 241, 242
Meluna, 252
Memel, 43, 124, 127, 128; river, 124
Meran, 76
Mersen, treaty of, 27
Merv, 290
Meskene, 267
Mesopotamia, 38, 262, 263, 265, 267, 270, 271, 306, 308
Mesta, R., 254
Metternich, 75, 94, 164
Metz, 29, 30, 55, 60, 72, 138, 159
Meuse, R., 27, 28, 35, 42, 43, 51, 53, 56–60, 63, 301
Mexico, 144, 237, 314
Mexico, Gulf of, 298
Michael Paleologus, 246, 259
Michael of Serbia, 190
Michael Apasi of Transylvania, 160, 161
Michael the Brave of Wallachia, 175, 176, 179, 181, 186, 207
Milan, 64, 196, 221, 227, 238
Milosch Obrenovitch, 194
Minden, 41
Mindovas of Lithuania, 126
Minorca, 238, 297
Mirceo, 174, 186, 191
Mitau, 130
Moesia, 180, 186
Mohacz, battle of, 90, 155, 156, 160, 168
Mohammed II, 192, 259
Moldau, R., 83, 89
Moldavia, 107, 154, 171–7, 184, 187, 188, 208, 275, 282, 287
Mölln, battle of, 140
Monaco, 42
Monastir, 198, 211, 282
Mongolia, Mongols, 23, 275, 289–91, 306
Montenegro, 179, 190, 194, 197, 198
Montferrat, 222, 227
Morava, R., 154, 155, 174, 189–96, 198, 200, 201, 205, 206, 210, 260
Moravia, 75, 83, 86, 87, 89, 91, 92, 101, 121, 151, 155, 275, 283
Morea, 224, 225, 246, 248
Moreau, General, 231
Morena, Sierra, 236
Morocco, 37, 38, 48, 212, 235, 240–4, 304, 325
Morsö, 145
Morvan, 66
Moscow, 103, 112, 130, 152, 273, 275–7, 283, 292
Moselle, R., 35, 39
Moskwa, R., 132, 277, 278
Mostar, 195
Mosul, 266, 267, 269–72, 325
Möttling, 76
Mscislav I of Poland, 100
Mscislav II of Poland, 100
Mudania, armistice of, 265
Mukden, 280
Muluja, R., 240, 242
Munich, 76
Munkacz, 169
Mur, R., 202, 203
Murad I, Sultan, 154, 191
Murad II, Sultan, 192
Murg, 65
Murmansk, 132
Murten, battle of, 64
Mussolini, Benito, 233
Mustafa, Kara, 104, 207
Mustafa, Kuprulu, 192
Mustafa III, Sultan, 247

Namur, 53, 54, 60
Naples, 238, 298
Napoleon I, 31, 32, 37, 38, 42, 43, 61, 64, 65, 75, 78, 92–4, 109, 110, 115, 120, 123, 135, 137, 142, 164, 194, 208, 217, 223, 225–7, 231, 232, 238, 239, 281, 287, 301, 303, 306, 307, 339
Napoleon III, 32, 177, 228
Narev, R., 99
Narses, 222
Narva, 104, 135, 137, 285
Narva, R., 125, 127, 130, 273, 278
Nashorn, 146, 147
Nations, League of, 14, 41, 49, 60, 62, 67–9, 71, 73, 76, 77, 80, 82, 120, 123, 124, 148, 150, 241, 256, 266, 269, 270, 288, 289, 306, 307, 309, 311, 313, 316, 318–21, 324–31, 333–44
Navas de Tolosa, battle of, 236
Nebuchadnezzar II, 267
Neckar, R., 39, 55, 86
Neiburg, 50
Neidenburg, 124
Nelson, 142
Nessau, 101
Netherlands (*v.* Holland), 29, 30, 42, 51, 55, 58, 62, 158, 237, 238, 296, 298, 301, 302, 340
Netze, R., 108, 129, 131
Neufchâteau, 54
Neuhausel, 159
Neuilly, treaty of, 14
Neumarkt, 108
Neva, R., 131, 135, 140, 273, 276, 280
Nevrokop, 216
Nevsky *v.* Alexander Nevsky
New Orleans, 299
New Zealand, 309, 313
Nice, 228, 229, 232
Nicephorus I, Emperor, 204
Nicolas I of Russia, 165, 249, 283, 304

Nicolas II of Russia, 113, 179, 290
Nicopolis, battles of, 23, 154, 174
Nida, R., 99
Niemen, R., 81, 99, 109, 126, 130, 285
Nieuport, 54
Niger, R., 38
Nigeria, 37
Nikita of Montenegro, 198
Nile, 38, 267, 303, 304
Nish, 194–6, 210, 260
Nisibin, 267, 269, 270
Nizava, 210
Normans, Normandy, 139, 224
North Sea, 38, 148, 149, 224, 282, 307
Norway, 132, 134, 137–9, 141, 142
Novara, 227, 228
Novawies, 191
Novgorod, 130, 274, 275, 277
Novibazar, 195–7
Nuremberg, 91
Nymwegen, peace of, 237
Nystadt, peace of, 134, 135

Obi, R., 276
Ochrida, 203, 206, 216, 218
Ocna, 188
Octavian, 77
Oder, R., 30, 32, 42, 89, 93, 99, 100, 108, 110, 116, 120, 127–9, 332, 335
Oderburg, 84
Odessa, 285
Oesel, 135, 140, 141, 149, 150
Ogloviaczka, R., 99
Oitos Pass, 188
Okhotsk, 289
Oleg of Kiev, 273, 274
Oliva, peace of, 103, 104, 125, 134
Olmütz, 84, 89, 91, 94
Olympus, Mt., 251, 253
Omayyads, 236
Omortag of Bulgaria, 204, 205
Onega, Lake, 132
Onod, 163
Oran (Algeria), 42
Oresund, 148, 149
Oro, Rio d', 241
Orsova, 78, 172, 187
Osman I, Sultan, 259
Osning, 32, 41
Osterode, 124
Otchakov, 279
Otranto, 224
Otto I, Emperor, 100, 151
Otto II, Emperor, 86, 138
Otto of Greece, 249
Ottokar II of Bohemia, 87, 88
Ottomans *v.* Turkey
Oudenarde, battle of, 297

Pacific Ocean, 50, 61, 278, 306, 309–311, 314
Padua, 225
Palatinate, 35, 36, 39, 44, 46, 62, 295, 307, 330
Palestine, 263, 306, 308
Palffy, 163
Palmerston, 303, 305
Pamir mountains, 281, 303
Panama Canal, 314
Pannonia, 77, 78, 85, 232
Papacy, 88, 89, 139, 151, 224, 225, 228, 229
Paris, 23, 42, 55, 95; peace of (1783), 299, 306; peace of (1815), 44; conference of (1815), 339; conference of (1856), 228, 250, 279; conference of (1918), *v.* Versailles treaty
Parma, 238
Pasics Nikola, 200
Passau, 76, 92
Pasvanoglu, 208
Peene, 135
Peipus, Lake, 278; battle of, 130, 276
Peiraeus, 250, 258
Pekin, 286, 291, 310
Pellé, General, 96
Peloponese *v.* Morea
Pepin, 27
Persia, 171, 266, 267, 269, 272, 278, 281, 290, 291, 308
Persian Gulf, 309
Petchenegs, 152, 274
Peter III of Russia, 22
Peter of Aragon, 258
Peter Raresch, 175
Peter the Great of Russia, 91, 105, 107, 125, 132, 135, 176, 208, 248, 278, 280, 281, 286, 287, 292
Petritch, 216, 217, 256
Petrograd, 132, 273, 285
Petroseny, 188
Phanar, 247; Phanariots, 177
Philip II of Spain, 253
Philip V of Spain, 238
Phillipine Islands, 210
Philipsburg, 50
Piacenza, 219
Piasts, 100–2, 104, 110, 152
Piave, R., 166, 221, 230
Piedmont, 39, 158, 159, 221–3, 226–9
Pilica, R., 99
Pindus, Mt., 251
Pirot, 195, 196, 210, 260
Pitt, the Elder, 25, 31, 298, 300
Pitt, the Younger, 301, 303, 305
Platten, Lake, 162, 168
Plauen, 129
Plevna, 179
Pliska, 204
Plock, 110
Ploken Pass, 77
Po, R., 39, 64, 190, 218–23, 225, 227, 237, 279

Podiebrad, *v.* George of Podiebrad
Podolia, 101–3, 116, 283
Poincaré, Raymond, 46, 47, 320
Poitiers, battle of, 23
Poland, 23–5, 30, 35, 43, 48, 49, 84, 86–9, 93, 96, 99–134, 138, 141, 144, 149, 150, 153, 158–60, 163, 168, 175, 187, 194, 247, 274, 275, 277, 278, 282, 283, 285–7, 314, 319, 323, 324, 326, 332, 333, 336, 341
Polangen, 128
Polish Succession, war of the, 30, 91, 106, 227, 238, 279, 297
Pollentia, 221
Poltava, battle of, 105, 135
Pomerania, 77, 78, 100, 101, 103, 108, 135, 137, 141, 142
Pomerellia, 108, 125, 128, 129
Poniatowski, Joseph, 110
Poniatowski, Stanislas, 107, 109
Port Arthur, 281
Porto Rico, 239
Portsmouth, treaty of, 289
Portugal, 23, 57, 238, 240, 241, 294, 311
Posen, 100, 105, 109, 110
Poswol, treaty of, 130
Pozarevac, 191
Prague, 42, 84, 86, 92, 93, 95, 96; peace of, 145
Pregel, 108, 124
Premyslids, 87, 152
Prespa, Lake, 205
Pressburg, 76, 77, 94, 162, 168, 169
Preveza, 245
Prilep, 206
Pripet, R., 99
Prizrend, 192, 195, 198
Propontis *v.* Marmara, Sea of, 260
Prosna, R., 99, 113
Provence, 22, 78, 222
Prussia, 21, 22, 30, 51, 52, 61, 65, 92–4, 101, 107–11, 123, 127, 129, 137, 143–5, 226, 287, 298, 302, 307, 330, 339
Prussia, East, 49, 89, 99, 108, 122, 124, 125, 128, 129
Prussia, West, 89, 102, 103, 123, 128, 129
Pruth, R., 174, 175, 187, 188, 208, 274, 279, 282
Pyrenees, 28, 38, 39, 50, 219, 220, 235–8, 241, 298; peace of the, 237

Queich, R., 39, 44

Raab, R., 161, 168
Rabova, 178
Radetzky, Marshal, 228
Radkersburg, 77, 174
Radom, 107, 109, 110
Rakka, 267
Rakoczy *v.* George, Francis, and Sigismund Rakoczy
Ramillies, battle of, 297
Rapallo, treaty of, 202
Rapp, Marshal, 123
Ratisbon (Regensburg), 86, 93
Ravaillac, 158
Ravenna, 78, 221, 222
Red Sea, 267, 309
Red Tower Pass, 154, 165
Regensburg (Ratisbon), 78
Reichenberg, 83, 84
Remi, 188
Rendsburg, 143
Republic of the Far East, 289
Reval, 135, 140; conference of, 179
Rhaetian Alps, 222
Rhenish Republic, 36, 43
Rhine, 13, 25, 27–39, 41–51, 54–60, 62–5, 71, 74, 77, 79, 81, 85, 91, 92, 105, 106, 120, 156, 158, 159, 165, 190, 200, 201, 217, 221, 226, 227, 231, 232, 237–9, 242, 256, 259, 260, 262, 264, 269, 271, 272, 279, 280, 283, 295, 298–302, 306, 308, 310, 312, 313, 320, 325, 326, 328–31, 335, 338
Rhine, Confederation of the, 93
Rhine, Pact of, *v.* Locarno, 314
Rhodes, 233, 245, 253, 258, 264
Rhodope mountains, 211, 215, 216, 258
Rhône, R., 27, 28, 30, 39, 42, 43, 64, 65, 81, 158, 159, 190, 219, 220, 223, 227, 231, 235, 260, 298
Richelieu, 20, 32, 36, 45, 159, 237, 320,
Riff, 240–44
Riga, 130, 183, 278, 284, 286
Rimini, 219, 220, 221
Rimnicu-Sarat, 282
Riza Khan, 308
Robert of Aragon, King of Hungary, 174
Robespierre, 37
Rocroi, 58
Roer, R., 43, 51, 56
Röm, 146
Romanov, House of, 277, 278, 282, 287
Rome, 223, 229
Rome, ancient: Roman Empire, 27, 39, 77, 85, 90, 172, 176, 189, 204, 219–22, 231, 232, 235, 236, 240, 246, 260
Romey, Val, 159
Rosenburg, 124
Rossbacii, battle of, 31, 92, 93
Rossel, 124
Rossieny, 128
Rottweil, 64
Rougemont, Pictel de, 72
Roumania, 23, 25, 37, 78, 84, 97, 113, 133, 151, 153, 154, 157, 166–188, 193, 202, 203, 209, 214–16, 218, 279
Rowanduz, 266, 269
Rubicon, R., 221
Rudnik, 194
Rudolf II of Austria, 160, 161

Rudolf of Habsburg, 74, 87
Rugen, 140
Ruhr, R., 35, 39, 47, 50, 57, 256, 301, 307, 313, 320, 323, 325
Ruhrort, 36, 325
Rumelia, 206, 209, 210, 214, 215, 251, 260
Rupel, 216
Rurik, 273, 276
Russia, 21, 22, 24, 25, 31, 32–5, 43, 53, 55, 71, 91–3, 95, 96, 99, 101–14, 116, 118–20, 122, 123, 125–7, 129–33, 135, 137, 141, 143, 144, 149, 150, 165, 176–80, 182, 183, 186, 188, 193–200, 205, 207–12, 214, 217, 247–52, 254, 261, 262, 264, 269, 271–92, 298, 299, 304–6, 308–10, 313, 316, 318, 334, 335, 337, 339
Russia, Little, 286
Russia, Red, 101, 104, 115, 154
Russia, White, 104, 115, 286
Rustchuk, 178
Ruthenes, 484, 112, 184
Ryswick, Peace of, 296, 306

Saale, R., 31, 32, 65, 85, 120
Saar, R., 35, 36, 43, 44, 55, 138, 307, 323, 327, 330
Sabaudia, 223, 226
Sacramento, R., 314
Sahara, 39
St. Bernard, Great, 64
St. Bernard, Little, 64
St. Bonifacio, Straits of, 38
St. Gall, 74
St. Germain, treaty of, 14
St. Gotthard (Austria), 161
St. Gotthard (Switzerland), 64, 65, 225
St. Jacob, battle of, 64, 156
St. Jean de Maurienne, agreement of, 262
St. Pierre, Castel de, 326, 338, 339, 342
St. Stefano, peace of, 209
St. Stephen, Crown of, 87, 89, 161, 163
Sajo, R., 153
Sakhalin, 289
Sakkharia, R., 262, 265, 282
Salambria, 251
Salassians, 221
Salisbury, Lord, 303
Salonika, 179, 182, 190, 196, 198, 199, 201, 203, 204, 206, 211, 215, 216, 218, 245, 252–4, 256, 258, 260, 261, 279, 282
Saltholm, 149
Saluzzo, 158
Salzburg, 76
Samarkand, 290
Samo, 85, 86, 88
Samogitia, 128, 129
Samothrace, 253, 266
Samuel of Bulgaria, 206
San, R., 99
Sandek, 108
Sandomir, 100
Saône, R., 28, 220, 237
Saracens, 139, 246
Saragossa, 239
Saraiewo, 200
Sardinia, 227, 228, 238
Sargans, 71, 72
Sargon of Assyria, 267
Save, R., 27, 76–8, 151–3, 168, 172, 189, 192, 195, 199, 205, 207, 224
Savoy, 42, 64, 68, 69, 105, 158, 159, 223–8, 232, 238, 296
Saxons of Transylvania, 164, 175
Saxony Saxons, 23, 83, 86, 87, 91–4, 105, 107, 110, 121, 123, 140
Sazawa, 83
Schässburg, 187
Scheldt, 23, 28, 59, 60, 237, 301
Schleswig, 49, 134, 138, 141–6, 148, 149
Schmalkald War, 90
Schwarzenberg, Prince, 65, 94
Scotland, 295
Scythians, 171
Sebastian of Portugal, 240
Sebastopol, 279
Sebu, R., 240, 242
Sedan, 137
Seine, 39
Selim II, Sultan, 160
Seljuk Turks, 259, 267
Semendria, 192, 215
Senegal, 39
Serbia, Serbs (*v.* Jugoslavia), 24, 25, 34, 37, 78, 108, 112, 153–5, 174, 178, 179, 189–206, 209–215, 218, 224, 226, 230, 233, 246, 249–54, 256, 275, 281, 282, 305, 316
Seres, 216
Sereth, R., 174–7, 181, 184
Serga, 240
Servien, 329
Sesia, R., 227
Seven Years' War, 21, 30, 41, 92, 93, 106, 107, 164, 298
Sevrés, Treaty of, 263, 265
Shantung, 310
Shardagh, 190, 192, 211, 253
Shatt-el-Arab, 271
Shipka, 208
Shumla, 178, 205
Shungarei, 291
Siberia, 95, 277, 280, 281, 289
Sicily, 219, 227, 238, 245
Siebenbürgen, 77, 78, 102, 155–8, 160–2, 167, 170–3, 175, 176, 181, 182, 184, 186, 187
Siedlce, 110
Sigismund I of Poland, 102, 104
Sigismund, II of Poland, 102

Sigismund III of Poland, 103
Sigismund of Hungary, 154, 174, 191
Sigismund Rakoczy, 160
Silesia, 49, 83, 86, 87, 92, 96, 100, 107, 110, 115, 116, 118, 153, 155, 275; army of, 65; wars of, 91, 92
Silistria, 178, 180, 214
Simeon of Bulgaria, 205, 206, 215
Sinai, 261, 263
Singapore, 309, 310, 313
Sin-kian, 291
Sitten, 73
Sivas, 263
Skoplje, 192, 195, 196, 198, 206
Skutari, 190, 195, 196, 198, 203, 260, 261
Slivnitza, battle of, 210
Slovakia, Slovaks, 83, 84, 98, 100, 162, 167
Slovenia, Slovenes, 112, 160, 164, 189, 193, 199, 202, 203
Smolensk, 101, 103, 135, 278
Smolina, battle of the, 130
Smyrna, 245, 255, 256, 258, 262, 263, 265
Sobieski, John, 104, 105
Sofia, 180, 206, 210, 211, 215, 260
Solferino, battle of, 95, 177, 228
Somme, R., 113
Sophia of Kiev, 101
Spa, conference of, 322
Spain, 22, 23, 29, 37, 43, 51, 57, 105, 158, 159, 219, 220, 222, 224, 235–44, 260, 294, 296, 297, 299, 302, 325, 340
Spanish succession, war of the, 30, 91, 92, 105, 162, 163, 225, 258, 296, 342
Sparta, 246
Speyergau, 39
Split, 202
Splügen, 231
Spoleto, 219
Steinkirk, battle of, 296
Stelvio, 71, 76, 231
Stephan Dushan of Serbia, 190, 196, 198, 203, 246, 247, 258
Stephan Lazarevitch, 192
Stephan of Hungary, 152, 155, 175
Stephan Urosh II of Serbia, 190
Sterzing, 76
Stettin, 135
Stilicho, 221
Stockholm, 135
Straits *v.* Bosporus
Strasbourg, 29 30, 39, 42, 50, 51, 64, 156, 259, 329
Struma, R., 182, 199, 216, 246, 254
Strumnitza, 203, 216, 256
Stuart, House of, 62, 295, 296
Styria, 76, 77, 157, 160, 231
Suabia, Suabians, 79, 162
Sudetia, 83, 84
Suevi, 235, 236
Suez Canal, 303
Suleiman, Sultan, 154, 155, 157, 160, 175, 192, 207
Suleimanya, 266, 269
Sully, Duke of, 158, 339
Sundgau, 221
Suvarov, Marshal, 220
Sviatoslav, 274
Sweden, Swedes, 30, 91, 102, 103, 105, 106, 123, 125, 130–5, 137–44, 149, 150, 159–61, 163, 273, 274, 276–8, 299
Swir, 132
Switzerland, Swiss, 29, 37, 41, 42, 52, 59, 60, 61, 63–75, 77, 78, 158, 218, 221, 225, 231, 331, 336
Syagrius, 232
Sylt, 146, 147
Syria, 37, 38, 48, 224, 261–3, 265, 270, 271, 325
Syrmia, 162
Szatmar, 163, 168, 169, 183, 187
Szechenyi, Count, 164
Szegedin, 158
Szeklers, 166
Sziget, 160

Tagliamento, R., 221
Tagus, R., 239
Tamerlane, 23
Tanga, 309
Tangier, 236, 240, 244, 271
Tannenberg, battle of, 101, 129
Tarim, R., 291
Tarnopol, 283
Tarsus, 267
Tartars, 23, 102, 103, 126, 134, 206, 247, 274–7, 279, 285
Tarvis, 202
Tashkent, 290
Tauber, R., 39
Taunus mountains, 50, 55, 92
Taurus mountains, 261, 267
Tavasteland, 131
Taygetus, Mt., 246
Taza, 240–2
Tchataldja, 198, 212, 213, 265
Tcheskesses, 274
Tchesme, 248
Teheran, 308
Temesvar, 168, 169, 187, 202, 203
Tenedos, 253, 266
Teplitz, 94
Teschen, 84, 96, 99, 116
Tetuan, 240, 244
Teutonic Orders, 101, 102, 122, 123, 125, 127–30, 276
Teutons, 220
Thaia, R., 84
Thasos, 253

Thebes, (Greece), 246
Theiss, R., 84, 151–3, 156, 161, 167–9, 172–4, 184, 188, 189, 203
Theodorici, Emperor, 77, 222, 223
Theodoric II, 236
Thermopylae, 253
Thessaly, 190, 197, 211, 246, 248–52
Thirty Years' War, 29, 43, 91, 103, 141, 158, 161, 237
Thorn, 99, 108–10, 115, 118, 124, 128; peace of, 123
Thrace, 197, 207, 208, 217, 218, 245, 248, 249, 252–5, 259–61, 263, 266
Thuringia, 31, 83, 86
Tiber, R., 219, 237
Tiberius, Emperor, 221, 231
Tibet, 291
Ticino, R., 71, 72, 231
Tigris, R., 27, 265, 266, 269
Tilly, 141
Tilsit, peace of, 110, 208, 287
Timok, R., 194, 195, 205
Tirnovo, 206, 210
Tirol, 76–8, 138, 230–2
Toghrul, Beg, 267
Tököly, 162, 165, 166
Tonale Pass, 76
Tondern, 145, 146, 148
Toplica, 195
Topraisar, 187, 282
Tornea, 122, 131
Torrington, Admiral, 296
Tortona, 227
Toul, 29
Toulon, 296
Trafalgar, battle of, 32, 227, 238
Trajan emperors 77, 172, 176
Transcaspia, 279
Transjordania, 271
Transvaal, 303
Transylvania, 77, 157–9, 161, 167, 168, 171–3, 186, 188
Transylvanian Alps, 152, 153, 171, 173, 174, 183, 186, 205, 207
Trasimene, Lake, 220
Trautenau, 83, 84
Trave, R., 142
Treene, 146
Trent, 76, 228, 229, 233
Trianon, treaty of the, 14
Trier, 54
Trieste, 76, 202, 203, 226, 228, 233
Tripolitana, 197, 229, 253
Troppau, congress of, 339, 340
Trotsky, Leo, 290
Troy, 258
Tsingtau, 310
Tunghuses, 289
Tunis, 38, 197, 229
Turenne, 56
Turin, 75, 221, 226
Turkestan, 266, 289, 308
Turkey, Turks, 22–23, 25, 30, 37, 62, 75, 78, 90, 101–5, 107, 108, 154–60, 163, 164, 171, 172, 174–80, 191–7, 199, 206–8, 218, 225, 235, 247–56, 259–72, 278–81, 283, 288–90, 304, 306, 337
Turkomans, 290, 291
Tuscany, 222, 223
Tutrakan, 187
Two Sicilies, Kingdom of the, 238

Uhland, 80
Ukraine, 102, 104, 105, 109, 275, 285
Ulm, 78
Umbria, 223
United States of America, 25, 31, 35, 43, 44, 46, 60, 96, 186, 262, 289, 298–302, 306, 310–15, 318, 321, 337, 338
Unstrut, R., 190
Ural mountains, 273, 276, 277, 285, 286, 289
Urga, 291
Urmia, L., 266
Ushak, 265
Uskub, 198, 260, 282
Utrecht, peace of, 30, 227, 238, 306, 326, 338
Uzice, 191, 194

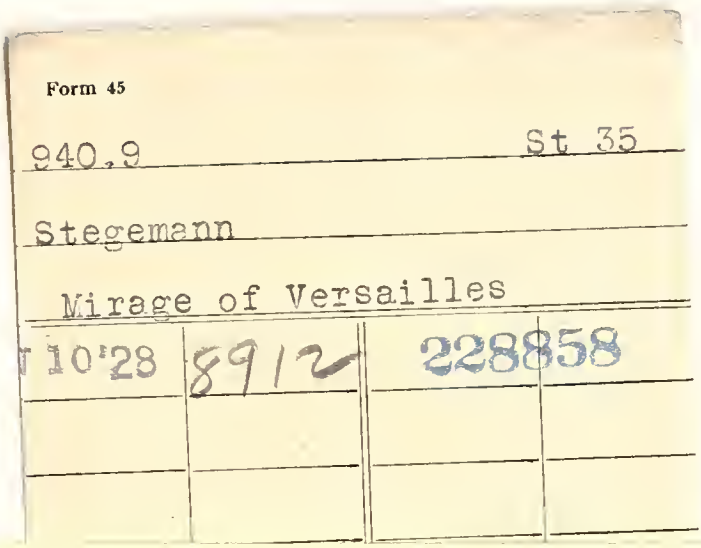
Valanza, 227
Valdai mountains, 130, 135
Valdemar II, 139, 140, 142
Valdemar IV, Atterdag, 141
Valmy, battle of, 31, 301
Valois, House of, 28, 29, 64, 224, 225
Valtelline, 159
Van, 267
Van, Lake, 266, 267
Vandals, 235, 236, 240
Var, R., 220, 232
Varangians, 173, 273, 274, 278, 285, 292
Vardar, R., 151, 181, 182, 190, 195–201, 205, 206, 214, 216, 246, 253, 254, 256, 260
Varna, 101, 154, 178
Varro, Terentius, 221
Vasa, House of, 103, 104, 134
Venceslas II of Bohemia, 87
Venceslas III of Bohemia, 87
Venceslas IV of Bohemia, 88, 96
Venceslas II of Poland (*v.* Jagellon), 101
Venice, 153, 191, 192, 202, 222–6, 228–30, 233, 246, 258
Veniselos, Eleutherios, 264
Vercelli, 220
Verden, 135
Verdun, 29, 64, 113, 181
Verona, 71, 76, 230; congress of, 239, 339, 340

Versailles, treaty of, 14, 36, 41, 43, 46, 50, 57, 63, 66–8, 71, 72, 74 75, 79, 81, 96, 98–100, 114, 115, 120, 123, 132–4, 137, 145, 146, 148, 149, 151, 157–9, 167–9, 172, 176, 183, 184, 186, 188, 202, 203, 215, 230, 231, 245, 255, 256, 262, 263, 265, 267, 271, 273, 285, 286, 291, 293, 306, 307, 309, 312–20, 322–30, 333–5, 339, 341–4
Verschitz, 202
Verviers, 56 ; peace of, 23
Viborg, 131, 135
Victoria, Queen, 302
Vidin,78, 171, 178, 194,196, 208, 210,215
Vienna, 74, 76, 78, 81, 92–4, 97, 104, 159–61, 207 ; congress of, 51, 112,142, 164, 228, 339; peace of (1866), 145
Vilna, 99, 101, 116, 126, 127
Vintsch, 72
Visé, 56
Visloka, R., 99
Vistula, 81, 89, 93, 99, 101, 104, 106, 108–12, 115, 116, 118, 120, 124, 127–9, 132, 279, 281, 283, 335
Vitold of Lithuania, 88, 126, 128
Vlachs of Macedonia, 206, 207
Vladimir I of Kiev, 274
Vladimir, duchy of, 101, 275, 276
Vladimir, Monomachos, 275
Vladimir on the Kliasma, 276
Vladislav I, Lokietek, 128
Vladislav II (Jagello), of Poland, 101, 175
Vladislav III, 101, 103
Vladislav IV, 89, 90
Vladislav of Hungary, 154, 192
Volga, R., 23, 153, 204, 274, 275
Volhynia, 102, 103, 126, 275
Voltaire, 338
Vorarlberg, 74, 76, 77
Vosges mountains, 39, 50, 66, 77
Vranya, 195, 210
Vrkar, 99
Vulkan mountains, 192
Vulkan Pass, 183

Waadt, 64
Waag, 152
Wagram, battle of, 93
Walcheren, 59
Wallachia, 77, 78, 103, 108, 153, 171–7, 184, 186–8, 190, 191, 204, 207, 208
Wallenstein, 91, 141
Walloons, 52, 58
Warsaw, 42, 99, 101, 103, 105, 109, 110, 113, 119, 120, 279 ; duchy of, 93, 110, 120, 164
Wartha, 100, 118, 119
Washington, conference of, 289, 311, 313–5, 318, 320, 342
Waterloo, battle of, 302
Weesen, 71
Weiss, R., 39
Weisskirchen, 202
Wellington, Duke of, 296, 340
Wenden, 102
Wends, 140
Wergha, R., 242, 244
Wesel, 56
Weser, 27, 30, 31, 41, 81, 146, 322
Westerplatt, 134
Westminster, treaty of, 21
Westphalia, treaty of, 29, 36, 329
White Mountain, battle of the, 91
White Sea, 132, 276, 285
Wieprz, 99
Wieringen, 60
Wilija, 126
Windau, 125
Wilhelmina of Holland, 62
Wilhelm II of Germany, 60, 179, 201, 281, 304
William III of Britain, 25, 30, 47, 51, 62, 295, 296
Wilson, Woodrow, 16, 25, 43–5, 75, 96, 114, 212, 261, 310, 311, 313, 314, 338, 339
World War, 35, 52–4, 60, 61, 66, 81, 95, 113, 147, 166, 176, 179, 181–4, 200, 201, 214, 215, 229, 241, 254, 261, 272, 274, 283–5, 290, 291, 316, 339
Würzburg, 41
Wyck, 146

Yalu, R., 280
Yangtsekiang, R., 311
Yantra, R., 206
Yap, island of, 311
Yellow Sea, 280, 288, 291
Yermak, 277
Young Turks, 196, 212, 252
Ypres, 54, 309
Yser, 54, 56

Zab rivers, 269
Zabern, 29, 39
Zanzibar, 146
Zaporogue, Cossacks, 102
Zapoyla, John, 155
Zara, 190, 195, 202
Zeebrugge, 60
Zeeland, 62
Zeeland, island of, 149
Zimisces, John, 192
Zips, 108
Znaim, 84
Zriny, Nicolas, 160
Zriny, Peter, 161
Zürich, 71, 72
Zwistara, R., 83



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